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MISS WOODS

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Welcome

Cheyenne Woods, niece of Tiger, is our cover star this issue. She is the first stand-alone lady golfer on the cover of *bunkered*.

That means I probably need to start by apologising for not having a female on the cover of the magazine before now. We've all scratched our heads and wondered why we haven't done it before. My only excuse is that I've not been in charge since the beginning, so I guess the blame lies elsewhere on that one...

I should also apologise for referring to Cheyenne as 'Tiger's niece'. You see, our man Michael McEwan caught up with Miss Woods recently and she told him she found it slightly 'frustrating' to be constantly linked with Tiger. You've got to give the girl credit for wanting to stand on her own two feet.

Problem is, when you've got Tiger Woods in your family - a PGA Tour winner 79 times, including 14 majors - you've not got much hope of him never being brought into the conversation.

Even when you're not in the same sport, a more famous family member can out-trump you. Take the recent case of Nick O'Leary. Never heard of him? He's a tight end in the NFL - and is consistently referred to as the 'grandson of Jack Nicklaus'. He's rarely just Nick O'Leary.

It must be hard being a success in your own right but always having to talk about someone else.

But we're all guilty of it. When we heard we were being given time with Cheyenne, our team talked about some context and what we wanted to get from the chat. "Ask her about Tiger," I said.

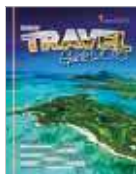
If Cheyenne continues to improve and make her presence felt in the majors, the Tiger references will reduce. But, sadly for her, the link will never go away. That's just the nature of things. Michael's interview with Cheyenne is on page 42.

This issue is packed full of awesome content, if I do say so myself. Aside from our bumper 48-page *Travel Guide* - featuring no less than 15 destinations - we've got a Lee Westwood exclusive (page 38), the inside scoop on how golf betting works (page 52), and an equipment section utterly loaded with new gear from the biggest names (page 81).

There's also a very intense but brilliant feature on page 56. The story is about how golf has played a small part in helping injured members of the British Armed Forces get their lives back on track. If it doesn't make you think about life a little more, I'm afraid not much will.

Bryce Ritchie, Editor
bryce.ritchie@psp.uk.net

Notable mentions...



TRAVEL GUIDE 2016

15 destinations inside!

Last year's guide was so damn good we decided to make this year's even bigger. Choose from 15 of the finest holiday golf destinations in the world in our bumper 48-page guide.



DMD TRIAL DAY

Readers speak up

Turn to **page 69** to read what six loyal *bunkered* readers had to say about the latest distance measuring devices on the market after they put them all into play.



NEW GEAR

It's that time of year...

If you've got GAS (Gear Acquisition Syndrome) then this time of year must feel like Christmas. All the biggest brands have new gear out - and we've got the scoop. Starts **page 81**.

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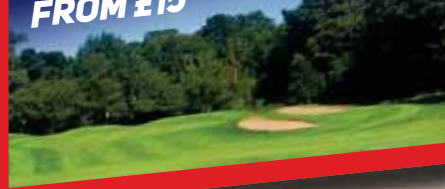
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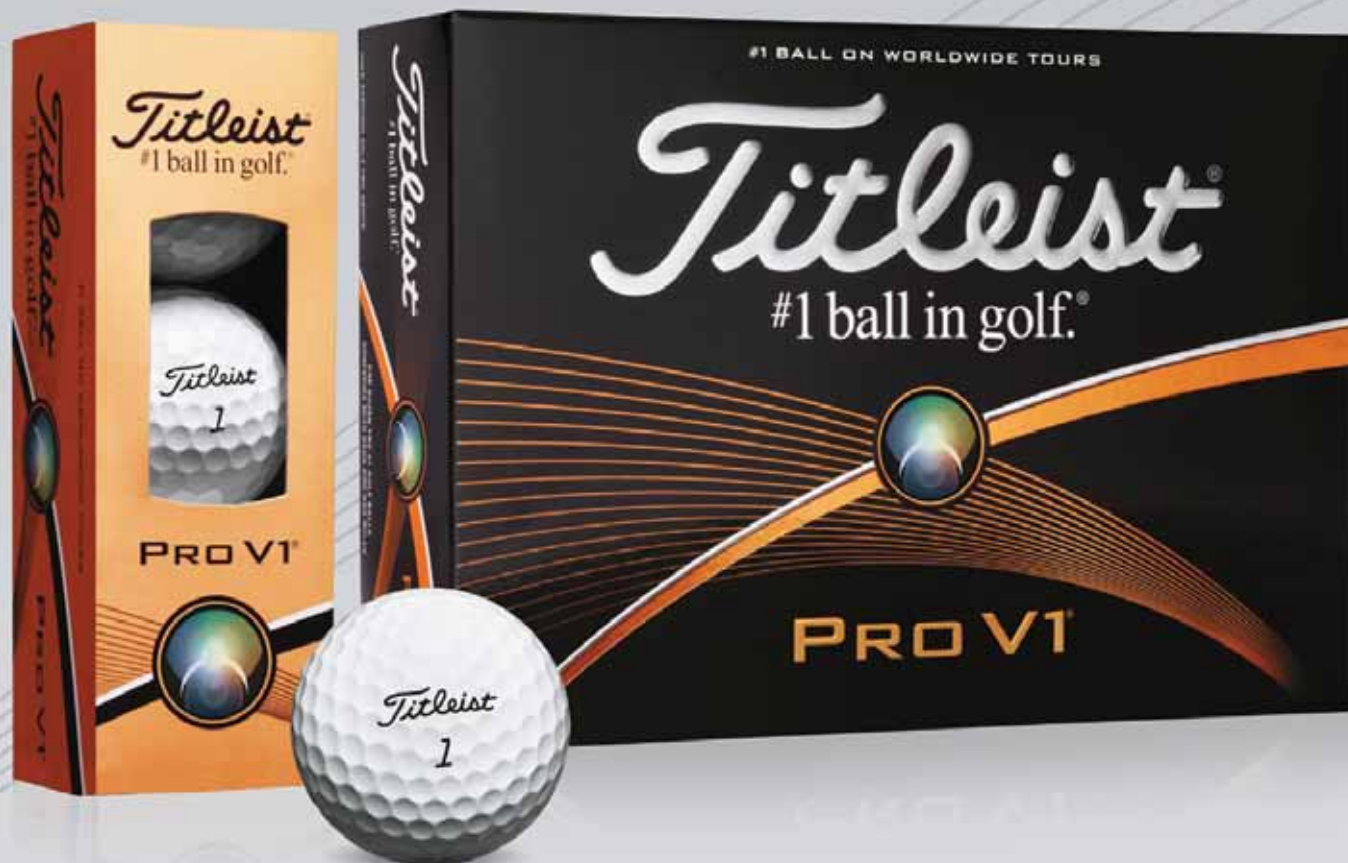




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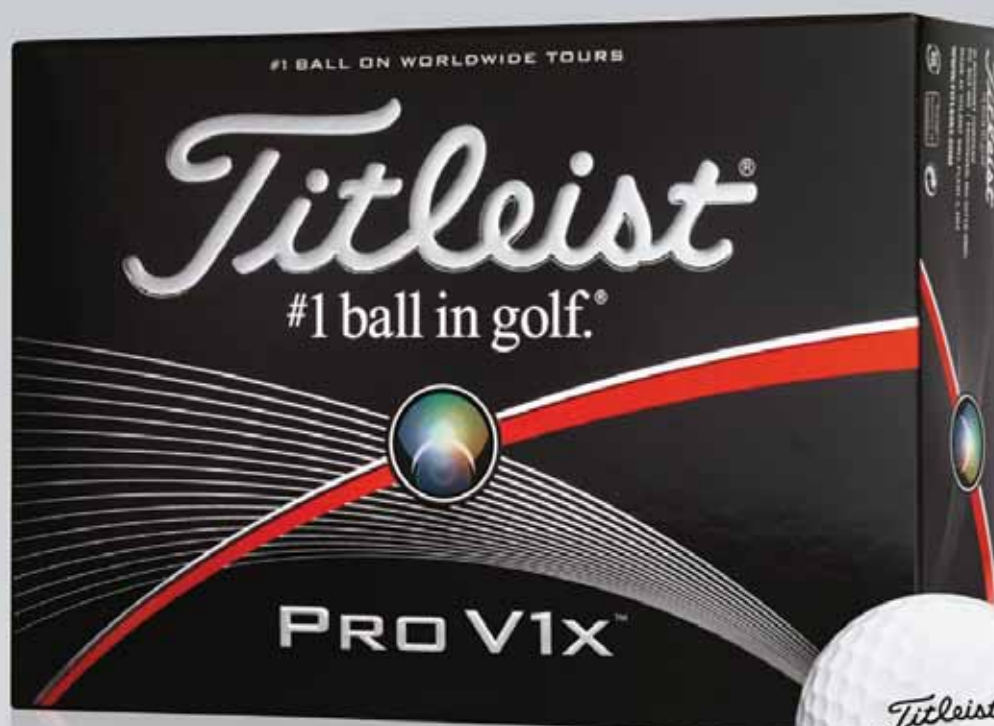
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CONTENTS

■ ISSUE 142



38

WESTIE'S WORLD

FEATURES

38 THE WORLD ACCORDING TO WESTIE

TOUR INSIGHT We caught up with the former world No.1 and European Tour career money leader to talk about his career, golf in the Olympics, the Ryder Cup and much more besides.

42 'I'M NOT JUST TIGER'S NIECE'

EXCLUSIVE Move over Tiger - there's a new 'Woods' in town... and she means business. Yeah, that's right: *she* means business. Check out our exclusive interview with LPGA rookie Cheyenne Woods.

52 MEET THE BOOKIE

EXCLUSIVE Craig Dennett interviews Paul Petrie, the co-founder of Scottish bookmaker McBookie, to find out more about gambling on golf.

56 FROM THE FRONTLINE TO THE FAIRWAY

EXCLUSIVE We discover how golf has played a key role in helping three injured servicemen get their lives back on track.

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CONTENTS

■ ISSUE 142

90

HOT NEW GEAR!
TITLEIST UNVEILS
716 IRONS FAMILY



INSTRUCTION

32 **Lag putt like a pro**

David Patrick explains how to roll it closer more often

34 **Toe down, chip better**

Steve Johnston demonstrates good chipping technique

36 **Fix your set-up**

Kevin Craggs on aligning around the clubface

48 **Rip it like Justin Rose**

Gavin Abson takes a look at the Englishman's iron skills

EQUIPMENT

81 **Mizuno MP-5 & MP-25**

84 **Mizuno S5 wedge**

85 **adidas ClimaHeat jacket**

86 **All new Srixon AD333**

90 **Titleist 716 irons**

94 **Ping i & GMAX irons**

96 **Callaway Great Big Bertha**

98 **ETIQUS watches**

100 **SHOWCASE:** Waterproofs

108 **REPORT:** Under Armour

Plus...

69 **READER TEST:** DMDs

OPINION

30 **'Fore' goodness sake**

Michael McEwan is angry at players who don't shout warnings after errant shots

COMPETITIONS

66 **Win** A trip to Malaga

67 **Win** A Sunderland rain suit

107 **Win** Stromberg clothing

REGULARS

14 **Letters**

16 **bunkered** On Tour

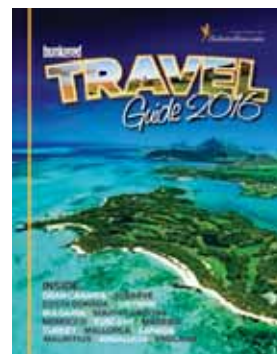
18 **On The Tee**

76 **Home Affairs**

125 **Bunkertalk**

129 **Prize Crossword**

130 **Numbers Game**



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READERS LETTERS

WIN... A SHORT-SLEEVED PING 'BANCROFT' POLO

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SCOTLAND'S NINE-HOLE CHALLENGE...

Just over three years ago, my youngest daughter and I made the decision to attempt to play all the nine-hole golf courses in Scotland. I sort of guessed there would be about 40-ish and it would be a good way for her to learn the game (jury out on that one!). A bit of research later, I discovered I had wildly underestimated the exact figure and I finally counted 169. In any event, we have had to adjust the total further as we have gone along and it now stands at 175.

Recently, we passed the 100 milestone and both Kirsten and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the clubs we have visited and the warm welcomes we have received. We have met many wonderful local stalwarts and been humbled by the efforts put in at grassroots level to keep the smaller of the clubs going.

A number of events stand out in our memories but, in time-honored fashion, it would be unfair of us to single out individuals amongst the many. It's just a huge 'thank you' to everyone. We have had a great time and look forward to attempting the next 75 courses.

To borrow a phrase from Alan McPherson in his blog 'Scotland's Golf Courses - All of them', "There are no strangers on a golf course, just friends you've never met..."

David & Kirsten Gardner



WE'VE GOT REALLY CRAFTY BIRDS IN AYR!

I can only agree with the gent [Graeme Robertson, Letters, Issue 140] who thinks being forced to play from fairway divot marks is an unfair situation. The rules allow relief from rabbit scrapes, mole hills, (all dumb animals) but not from a hole dug by a (presumed) not-so-dumb animal, the golfer.

Yes, we all try to put divots back but here in Ayrshire we have an intelligent brand of bird - crows, especially - who lift out the replaced divots as worms and other forms of their lunch tend to be found there. So, divots can take a while to heal. If the divot disintegrates and cannot be replaced then there is a hole, and if another player's ball lands in it and he plays from it, it becomes a deeper hole and so on, until a fair shot is impossible and a penalty drop becomes a consideration. Is this fair?

**Hugh McKenzie,
Troon Welbeck**



CURRENT AMATEURS GUILTY OF SLOW PLAY

As a regular reader of your magazine and a keen golfer, I like to think I maintain a reasonable pace of play, given that it is a very hot topic at present. I watched with dismay the final of the US Amateur Junior Championship on Sky Sports between Philip Barbaree and Andrew Orischak. Barbaree went on to win the match play final at the 37th having been five-down.

I did feel for Orischak who has a fast tempo of play as his opponent Barbaree got back into the game and then proceeded to take an absolute age over every shot. Barbaree's display on the putting green was the length of a

Broadway production as he surveyed the putt in every possible direction before fiddling about with his ball position, and finally stroking the ball towards the hole.

If this is an example of the pace of play we can expect from the future generation of pro golfers, then it can only lead to the public switching off the TV and watching something else.

Gordon Whitelaw, via email

***Editor's reply** I didn't catch any of the US Junior, but going by what you have said, maybe I'm the lucky one. Apparently in the US Amateur, they took three hours to play 12 holes. Slow play is a very serious problem right now.*

GIVE PLAYERS A FORWARD TEES OPTION

I have been reading with interest the comments about the proposed increasing of the men's handicaps from 28 to 36 and can see the merits of both sides of the argument. However, I wonder if there is an alternative. Most golf courses have at least three tees on each hole: white, yellow and red. Has it ever been discussed about the benefits of allowing higher handicap players to start playing from a forward tee and moving back as their handicap improves? I am sure that playing a shorter course would make their round a bit easier and probably a bit more pleasurable and also speed up play, something we would all appreciate.

John Gilchrist

MAYBE WE HAVE A SUPPLY AND DEMAND PROBLEM IN SCOTLAND?

I feel obliged to raise concerns regarding the star letter by Keith McKenzie in issue 141. Whilst I recognise Keith's argument, I am obliged to caution what could result if yet another 'good argument' results in further reduction in club membership. It cannot be denied that membership is a major issue for many clubs in Scotland and that the threat to long-term viability of many golf clubs in Scotland is a reality we should not ignore. Club membership is an essential element, perhaps the most critical, in ensuring continued provision of good courses. If Keith's argument prevails, more 'nomadic' golfers may well find the cost of playing the great game at a fabulous value in the short term. However, the long-term consequences can only be less courses to play on.

Scotland has always been

a place where access to golf is assured. Maybe there is a supply and demand aspect which will force the acceptance of fewer clubs and different ways of accessing the game.

I would appeal that watching golf clubs wither at the stem and adopting approaches to the game which undermines club membership is folly. The end of a golf club will lead to the loss of a facility which may prove impossible to replace. I ask whether good value and good access for golfers will prevail if some, possibly many, of our existing courses disappear due to a continuing demise of robust club membership.

Stuart Hislop, via email

Editor's reply Good letter Stuart and I agree with some of your points, except one. There are, in fact, too many golf courses in



Scotland. Even the SGU boss, Hamish Grey, is on record saying as much. During the golf boom in the late 1990s, we built too many and memberships became stretched. There is definitely a problem in Scotland with supply and demand. Some clubs don't operate as businesses and don't adjust to a changing market. I drove past a course recently on a

fairly sunny Saturday afternoon and it was completely empty. Not a soul on the course. They don't do weekend deals, or special rates, or anything. Under 'Visitor Information' on their website, which is where I would click to find out about visitor rates, one of the first things you see is the "dress code" for the club. And they wonder why they're not busy...

SGU REPOSE TO LAST ISSUE

The following is an official response from an Scottish Golf Union spokesperson with regard to Keith McKenzie's letter in issue 141...

"We are always looking at ways of maximising the benefits of club membership. Offering a CONGU handicap is regarded as a key benefit, and we believe that this could be de-valued by offering non-club members the same exclusive benefit.

"As an organisation, we encourage participation through our adult beginner programme, Get into Golf, and the national junior programme, ClubGolf, with the aim of growing the game and building membership.

"Golf club members are eligible to play in a club's fixture listed qualifying competitions, Open competitions and external competitions, allowing all scores returned by the player to be centrally recorded at their nominated home golf club to ensure the player's handicap reflects their current playing ability.

"Many clubs offer flexible memberships at a lower cost and these limited play memberships still enable people to hold official CONGU handicaps through shorter formats, like 9-hole Qualifying Competitions, and more flexible options for players to return scores at a time that suits their own personal circumstances. Supplementary Scores, for example, recognise the challenges many have in modern society committing to regular participation in fixture listed competitions.

"There has never been a better time to join a golf club, with many offering joining incentives and a wide range of membership categories and services for members. Many offer great value for money for potential members."

STAR LETTER

I couldn't help notice that Rory McIlroy was swinging well within himself at the USPGA. We all wondered after his ankle injury if he could mount a real challenge for the final major of the year and his reduced swing speed has allowed him to do just that - a message for all golfers who are struggling with their timing.

The Sky Sports pundits commented on how Jordan Spieth often kept up with the Irishman off the tee, which was unusual, but the answer is that Rory was sensibly swinging easily and smoothly. Certainly, when I watch Tiger Woods thrashing at the ball and playing really poorly, I would say to him to watch Rory at the PGA and swing under control and your timing will come back!

Do you think Tiger will heed this

message? I doubt it but Rory's reduced action is a tip for us all and well done to him for great self control.

Mike Campbell, Stockport

Editor's reply You can point to his tempo, his short game, his ego, his head, his decision-making, his lack of 'reps', or his problems with the driver, whatever - but the best way to see how Tiger is doing is to compare him to Jordan Spieth, the world's No.1 player. Woods, right now, can't hold a candle to Spieth. There's no shame in saying he might very well be past it. I still believe Tiger is the greatest ever but I honestly will be surprised if he plays past 2016. I'll say this, though... how good would it be for golf if he could win a major again? Here's hoping. A Ping polo is in the post.

TOO MANY PLAYERS 'PROTECTING' HANDICAPS

I couldn't agree less with Bob Wilson [Star Letter, Issue 140] and Ken Watson's back-patting comments on the matchplay handicap system [Issue 141]. I am currently a nine handicap and have played hundreds of matchplay ties over the years. I have never come up against a bandit single figure handicapper but I can tell you the amount of 16-plus handicappers that have just hit the "shot of their lives" and have "never played like this before" followed by, "you should have seen me last week".

In my experience, there are too many golfers protecting their handicaps at the higher end of the scale - that is why the three-quarter rule *had* to be introduced. This is not the case with lower players, whom I believe are striving all the time to get as low as possible.

Graham Robertson, Cambuslang

◆ YOUR VIEWS

SOME THOUGHTS ON 'NOMAD' GOLFERS

As always I have started my most recent *bunkered* magazine (issue 141) reading Bryce Ritchie's welcome.

I have been a member of Clydebank and District Golf Club for over 30 years and I believe that all visitors to our club are made welcome, whether club members or 'nomad golfers'.

Bryce quotes statistics that 70% of UK golfers play where they want, when they want, then goes on to promote the new *bunkered Golf Club* for £4.99 per month.

Over the years I have enjoyed many enjoyable golf days all over Scotland using *bunkered* vouchers and Green Fee Savers. However, as one of the 30% of UK golfers who are club members, I appreciate that the courses and clubhouse facilities up and down the country are predominantly funded by the club members.

I would ask the editor this simple question. If the 30% join the 70% and all become 'nomad golfers', who then pays to maintain the course and clubhouse facilities where we all want to play?

Martin Hamilton

Editor's reply *That's not really a real world situation, though, is it? The reality is that some golfers want to be members and some don't. Golf clubs need to adapt to that market and deal with it from a business perspective. They need to react to the market they are in. It's actually a great time to be a golfer right now. The game is accessible, cheap, the equipment is unbelievably good, and the top players are a joy to watch and are great role models. I often wonder why we always talk negatively about the game.*

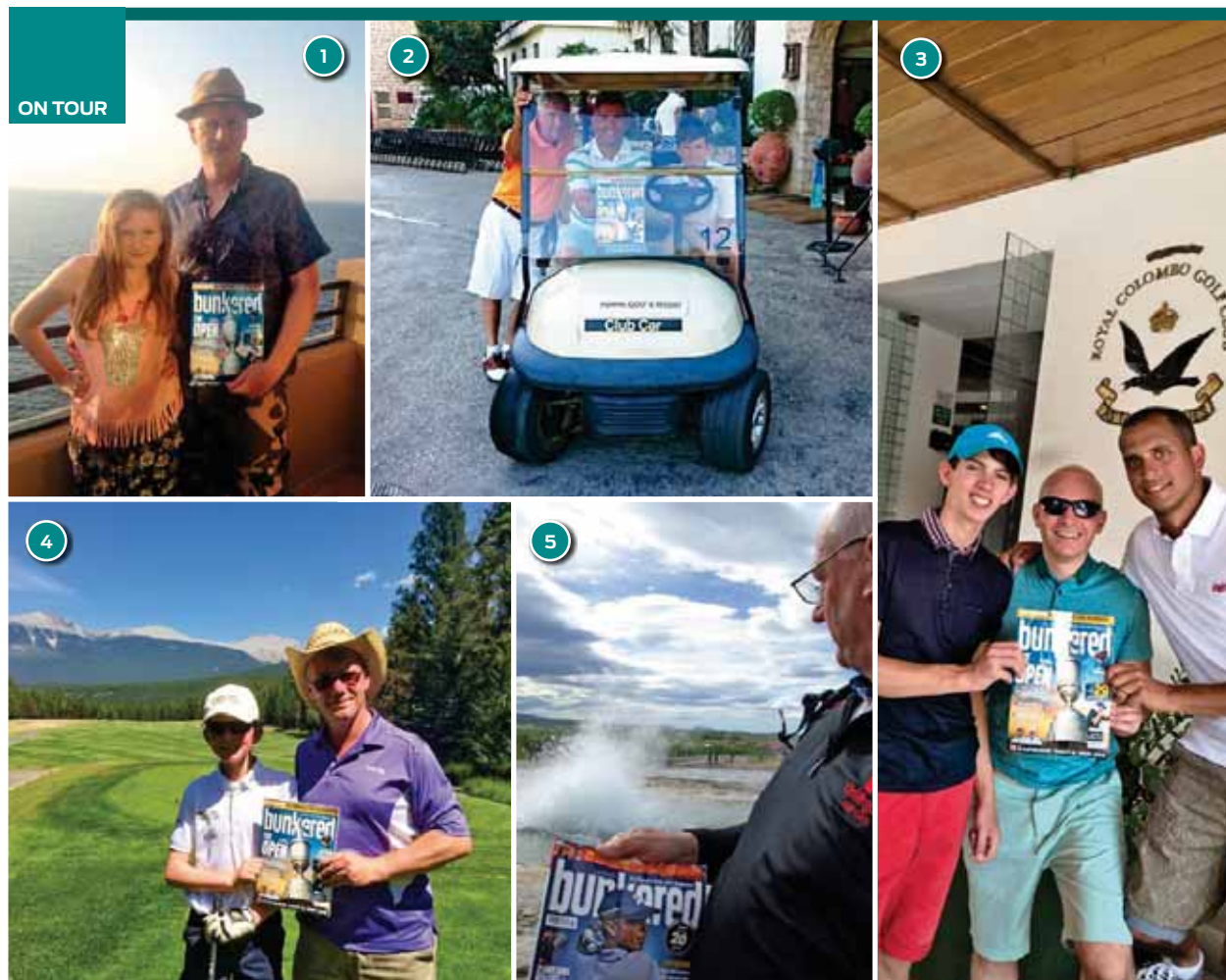


ARE YOU TAKING THE P***?

I was playing Williamwood in Glasgow recently, which I was really looking forward to and then enjoying, when I noticed another fourball playing the tenth. I was astonished when one of them, in the middle of the fairway, decided to just unzip and 'go' there, completely in the open, no trees, nothing. I was then told by the member who I was playing with that, in fact, one of this group was last year's club champion.

Really glad we were playing in front.

**Derek Oswell,
Glasgow**



1 Scott Cameron and daughter Lily in St Julians, Malta 2 Three generations of the Fossett family - Bill, Mark and Ryan - at Penina 3 Julian Perera, Gerry Hawthorne and Matthew Hawthorne after a round at Royal Colombo Golf Club, Sri Lanka 4 Graeme Hodge and son Alexander at Jasper Park Lodge, Canada 5 Ken Thomson at a geyser in Iceland.

PLAY LIKE A
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AND **STUNNING** LOOKS;
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ON THE TEE

'YOU CAN'T DROP THERE'

Norwegian golf club hunts 'Phantom Pooper' who has been soiling its course for **TEN YEARS!**

Warning: what you are about to read is rather disgusting. A mystery man has given a whole new meaning to the concept of 'taking relief'... by defecating in the holes of a Norwegian golf course.

Stavanger GC, in the south west of the country, has been

under attack from a phantom poopster for the best part of the last decade.

The vile visitor typically leaves his surprises for the greenkeepers by doing his business at night and, despite best efforts to trace the culprit, he remains at large.

Greenkeeper Kenneth Tennfjord told local media: "He has a couple of favourite

holes. And we know it is a man because the poos are too massive to be from a woman."

He added: "He poos only on weekdays. On weekends, I have never found poo on the golf course."

The club's managing director, Steinar Floisvik, revealed that the offender used to arrive to do his dirty

deed at the golf course by bike.

"In the early morning dew, we observed bicycle tracks on the course," said Floisvik. "Footsteps showed that he had done his business and the bicycle tracks disappeared back in the same direction that they had come."

Frode Jormeland, another member of the greenkeeping



'IT COULD BE SOMEONE WHO HATES GOLF, HAS A FETISH OR SUFFERS FROM MENTAL ISSUES'

STEINAR FLOISVIK, MANAGING DIRECTOR, STAVANGER GC



staff, said that the club even installed high-powered spotlights in an attempt to flush out the filthy felon only for the determined defecator to outsmart them.

"He climbed up a tree next to the lights and wriggled far out on a branch and dismantled the spotlights," said Jormeland. "How he managed the feat without

electrocuting himself or falling is a riddle."

The motives behind the mucky menace's attacks remain unclear. Floisvik, though, has floated a couple of theories. "It could be someone who, for unknown reasons, hates the game of golf," he said. "Alternatively, the person may have a fetish or suffer from mental issues."



1



2



PHOTO OP

1 Seems that Inbee Park couldn't quite get to grips with how to take a selfie with the RICOH Women's British Open trophy. Okay, we know she's just playing up to the cameras, but still. When you're taking a pic of someone who's *pretending* to take a pic of themselves... you know something isn't right with the world.

2 Richie Ramsay called the tournament 'class'. Scott Jamieson labeled it 'fantastic'. Philip Archer said it's 'how all tournaments should be run'. This was the scene behind the par-3 16th, known as Himmerland Hill, at the European Tour's Made in Denmark event.

3 Ryo Ishikawa has had what you might call an 'iffy' season - but he dresses cool. Seriously cool. When are Callaway going to start selling his Japan merchandise over here? Soon, we hope.

4 During the final round of The Barclays at Plainfield Country Club, presidential candidate Donald Trump chose to wander round the course - complete with a hefty security presence - and take in the action. This is one of the many selfies he posed for. Notice the 'Make America Great Again' slogan on the hat.

3



4





5



6

5 England's David Horsey lines up a putt with what appears to be a dance move taken straight from the Spice Girls' back catalogue. All together, "Stop right now, thank you very much..."

6 Meet Dash Day, son of Jason, playing in the sand after his daddy just won his third event in four starts.

7 Jordan Spieth throws the first pitch - left-handed, too - before the game between the Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees at Fenway Park, the oldest baseball stadium in the US. "It's cool to use this position to have these opportunities off the course," he said. The throw was 'high', if you're interested...



7

THE TOUR EYE JACKET.





Driving distances? They've come a **LONG** way

Are driving distances increasing? The R&A says no. The stats say yes.

“**D** riving distance is not increasing...

we think we've got the issue surrounded.” So said Peter Dawson, the soon-to-be former chief executive of the R&A, ahead of the 2011 Open Championship at Royal St George's.

Cue much raising of eyebrows, both then and ever since. If driving distance isn't increasing, asked the perplexed masses who follow golf most closely, then why

are some players now routinely hitting it well over 300 yards on most par-4s and par-5s?

Dawson was clever, though. He framed his remarks by looking at statistics gathered between 2002 and 2011. Sure enough, during that period, no, driving distances had not particularly increased. He also didn't take into account the fact that a lot of players are now hitting 3-woods or 5-woods off the tee as opposed to driver.

It would, however, be

interesting to know how he accounts for the statistics available for the longest drives recorded on the PGA Tour between 2000 and 2001.

In 2000, there was only one recorded drive of more than 300 yards, by David Duval in the third round of the Mercedes Championship (an event renowned for big hitting on account of its steep hills, elevated tees and warm air, which allows the ball to travel further).

A year later, however, 138 players broke that barrier, 11

of whom managed drives exceeding 350 yards, with one - Casey Martin at the Tucson Open - hitting it more than 400 yards.

Since then, there have been a total of 425 drives of more than 400 yards recorded on the PGA Tour. There were 83 in 2004 alone (albeit 76 of those were recorded at the same event, the Mercedes Championship once again).

In a 20-year period, between 1995 and 2015, the longest recorded drive on the PGA Tour has increased by



BOOM!

Jason Day averaged 129 yards into the par-4s at Glen Abbey GC during his RBC Canadian Open win. The shortest of those holes measured 414 yards.

almost 100 yards, from 315 to 409.

Bringing average driving distances into the discussion, the current 2014/15 leader in that department at the time of going to print was Dustin Johnson, with an average drive of 318.2 yards. He is one of 24 players to average over 300 yards per drive on the tour this season.

In 1995, John Daly led that particular table - with an average drive of 289 yards. That's 29.2 yards of a difference between the leaders

in that category in just 20 years.

So, either driving distances aren't increasing, as Dawson suggested, or the data gathered by the PGA Tour is wrong. They can't both be right.

One final thing: evidence suggests that the ability to hit it miles does not necessarily equate to wins. Indeed, the driving distance leaders on the PGA Tour since 1992 have managed a combined nine victories in the seasons that they've topped the standings.

Longest Drives on the PGA Tour

1995

1. John Daly, 315 yards (Mercedes Championship)
2. Fred Couples, 301 yards (Mercedes Championship)
3. John Huston, 299 yards (Mercedes Championship)
4. Neal Lancaster, 296 yards (Mercedes Championship)
5. John Daly, 295 yards (Mercedes Championship)
- = Bill Glasson, 295 yards (Mercedes Championship)

2015

1. Geoff Ogilvy, 409 yards (Hyundai Tournament of Champions)
- = Jason Day, 409 yards (Hyundai Tournament of Champions)
3. Brendon Todd, 404 yards (Hyundai Tournament of Champions)
4. Sergio Garcia, 403 yards (Honda Classic)
5. Camilo Villegas, 402 yards (Hyundai Tournament of Champions)
- = Jason Day, 402 yards (Hyundai Tournament of Champions)

Avg. Driving Distance on the PGA Tour

1995

1. John Daly, 289 yards
2. Davis Love III, 284.6 yards
3. Dennis Paulson, 284.1 yards
4. Vijay Singh, 283.5 yards
5. Kelly Gibson, 280.2 yards

2015

1. Dustin Johnson, 318.2 yards
2. Jason Day, 311.5 yards
3. Bubba Watson, 311.1 yards
4. Charlie Beljan, 310.1 yards
5. Adam Scott, 309.6 yards

* Tour average: 263.4 yards (1995), 289.1 yards (2015)

* ON THE TEE

60 SEC BIO

YOUR ONE-MINUTE GUIDE TO THE GAME'S NEWEST STARS



TYRRELL HATTON

Tyrrell who?

Hatton. A young English lad who is doing rather well for himself on the European Tour.

What kind of name is Tyrrell?

A rare one. It means 'Thunder Ruler', apparently and, according to an internet 'names' website, people called Tyrrell are likely to have 'a deep inner desire for travel and adventure, and want to set their own pace in life without being governed by tradition.'

What a load of drivell. Is he good at golf?

Very. After qualifying for the 2010 Open Championship as an amateur, Hatton turned pro in 2011, where he played mainly on EuroPro Tour and Jumeira Pro Golf Tour for a year. He then joined the Challenge Tour in 2012 and, the following year, he finished tenth on the rankings to earn his card for the European Tour. His rookie season went rather well - he finished 30th on the Race To Dubai, with earnings of €878,185 - and, this year, he has picked up where he left off.

When did he start playing?

At the age of three. His dad, Jeff, is also a pro and runs Hatton Golf near High Wycombe.

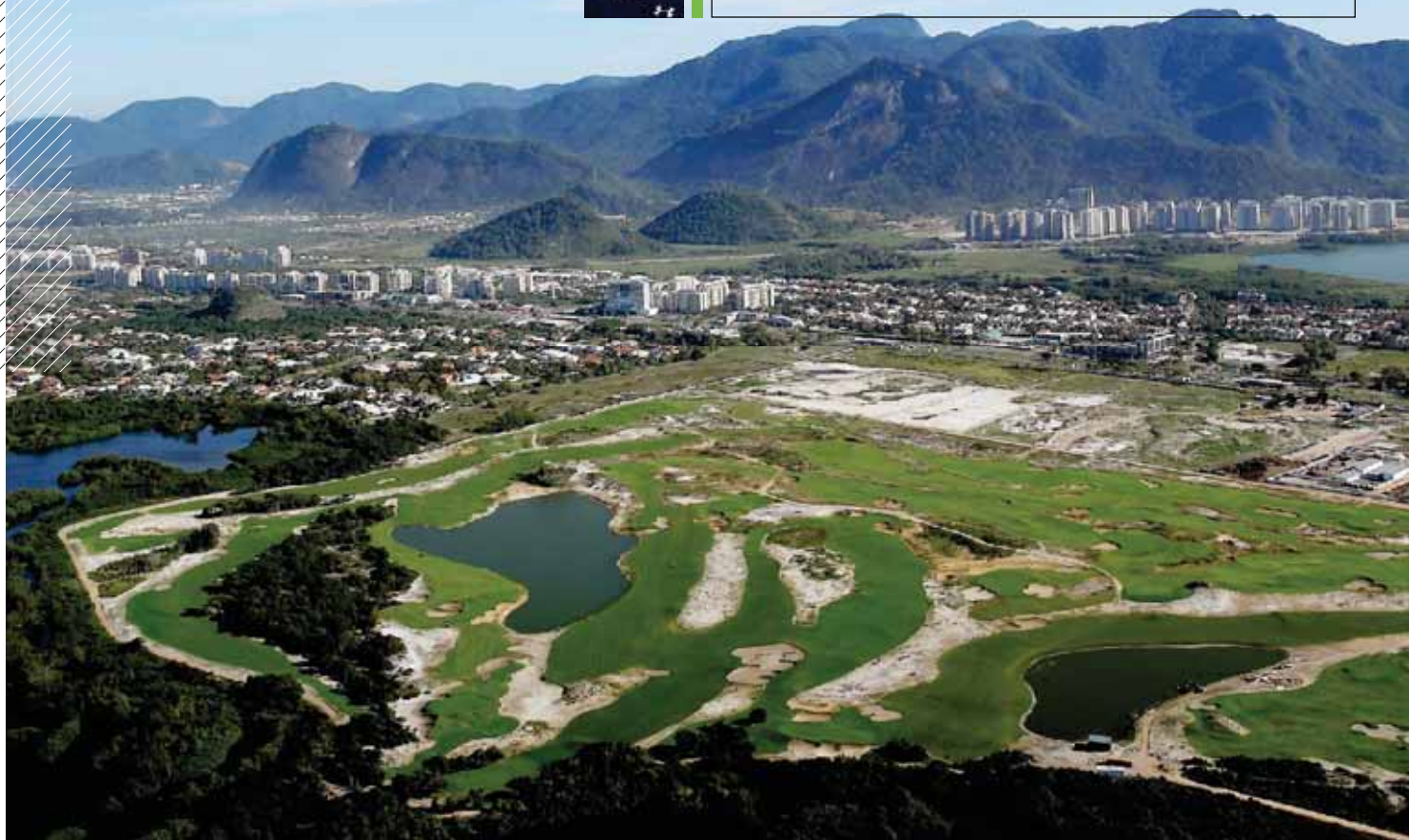
So, how do we spot him on the course?

Look out for his bag. Unlike most players, who display a golf equipment company's logo on their bag, Hatton instead has the emblem of Hilton Hotels on the sides of his.



'A GOLD MEDAL? SURE, IT WOULD [COMPARE TO A GREEN JACKET]. IT STANDS THE TEST OF TIME.'

JORDAN SPIETH



Let the Games begin...

Golf's return to the Olympics is just a few months away. You've got questions. We've got answers

■ What is the format for the Olympic golf events?

There will be individual men's and ladies 72-hole strokeplay competitions, each featuring a field of 60 players competing for gold, silver and bronze medals. In the event of a tie for any of the first three positions, a three-hole play-off will determine the medal winners.

■ How do players qualify?

Okay, concentrate.... All players within the top 15 on the OWGR as of July 11, 2016, are eligible, with a limit of four golfers per country. The remaining spots will go to the highest-ranked players from countries that do not already have two golfers qualified. Also, at least one golfer from the host nation (Brazil) and each geographical

region - Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania - will qualify.

■ When will the events take place?

The men's event is provisionally scheduled for August 11-14, with the women's scheduled for August 17-20. Both could potentially change.

■ Where will the events be played?

On the Reserva Marapendi Golf Course, *pictured*, in a part of Rio de Janeiro called Barra da Tijuca, approximately five kilometres from the Olympic and Paralympic village. The course has been designed by top American architect Gil Hanse specifically for the

Olympic Games. Afterwards, it will be opened to the public in order to develop golf in Brazil.

■ Wasn't there a lot of controversy about the course?

Yes, there were some very high-profile protests about the fact that it was being built on environmentally protected area. Their complaint was that the new course was (a) a danger to wildlife and (b) unnecessary given that Rio already has two golf courses. The subsequent legal proceedings caused construction of the new course to slow, although it is now back on track.

■ Is there any room for spectators?

Quite a lot actually. The course has a capacity for 2,500 seated fans and around 17,500 standing.

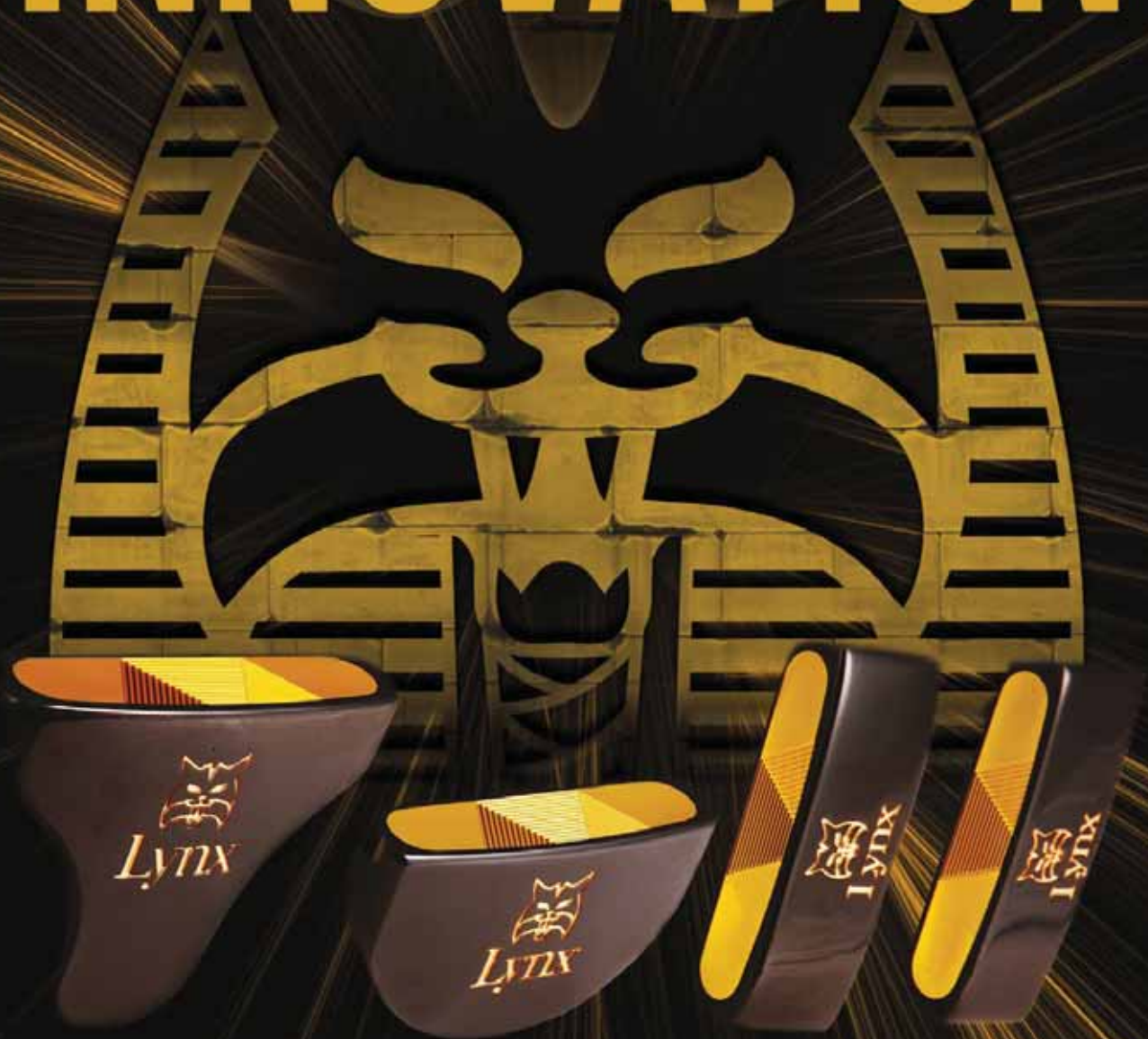
■ When did golf last feature in the Olympics?

That was back at the 1904 Games in St Louis, Missouri. It had also featured in the 1900 Games in Paris. A total of 93 different golfers have, to date, contested Olympic golf. That number will more than double next year.

■ Has a Brit ever won an Olympic golf medal?

Yes, and not just a Brit - a Scot! David Robertson, born in Shawlands, in Glasgow's south side, won bronze for Team GB in the 1900 Games in Paris.

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‘Fore’ seems to be the hardest word

Michael McEwan says it is time to get tough on pros who refuse to shout a warning after wild shots

Don't know about you but I've yet to meet a human being who can hear an outstretched hand. That's why it amazes me that some professional golfers still think this is an adequate way of trying to communicate with their audiences.

Week in, week out, the narrative plays on loop: a tour pro hits a shot in the general direction of the people behind the ropes and, instead of yelling 'Fore!', as it customary, he instead points in the general direction that his mishit is flying. As warnings go, it is about as effective as attempting to make a brew with a chocolate teapot.

Invariably, their shot will cannon into a poor, unsuspecting member of the public and, in return for being bloodied and bludgeoned by some errant millionaire, they'll get a signed glove. There's apparently no better remedy for being struck by a 45g solid projectile rifling through the air at over 100mph...

Now, look, accidents can and will happen. That's a fact of life and there are no guarantees that shouting 'Fore!' after a bad shot is going to prevent somebody taking a nasty one to the head - but there can be no denying that doing so drastically reduces the likelihood of serious injuries being sustained.

So, why don't more players do it? Some, it should be noted, are very good at warning spectators to the imminent danger of a golf ball hurtling towards them. Paul Lawrie is one such example. Many, though, just don't do it. They stick out an arm and hope for the best. And by 'best', I mean a lucky bounce back into play - even if it comes by way of some unlucky punter's napper.

I know fine well how much it hurts to be hit by a golf ball. It's happened to me. Luckily, I only took the last few bounces of a mate's shank cannoning



■ Some golfers seem to think it is enough to point an arm after hitting a shot towards spectators

‘IN RETURN FOR BEING BLUDGEONED BY SOME ERRANT MILLIONAIRE’S BALL, YOU GET A GLOVE’

into my shin but it still stung and left a nasty bruise that took a couple of weeks to heal.

It seems as though every other tournament these days produces a story of a fan being hit by a wild shot. In fact, it's become so common now as to be almost humdrum and expected. You could say, in fact, that the risk of getting hit by a ball will always be an occupational hazard of either playing golf or attending golf tournaments.

For that reason, then, not shouting 'Fore!' isn't just bad etiquette. It is inexcusable and, frankly, unfathomable. I mean, why wouldn't you want to do everything in your power to avoid hurting someone?

More to the point, what is it going to take for the game's ruling bodies to weigh in and start punishing players who don't deliver such warnings?

Does someone have to be killed before they start paying attention? Because that's the way it's going.

I've got a solution. Punish the guilty players. Not with a fine. They have enough cash for that not to bother them. Instead, hit them where it hurts: their scorecard.

A one-shot penalty for any player who hits a shot into the crowd without warning would surely be reasonable retribution. Let's face it, that's what they'd likely be facing if their ball wasn't to 'fortuitously' rebound back into play.

And, on that point, it has to be the player who hits it who makes the call. Your ball, your responsibility. Not your caddie's, not your playing partner's, not somebody else on the course - yours.

Sure, others can join in. The more the merrier. But if you don't and it's your ball, prepare to suffer the

consequences. Fair's fair, right?

Look, I get it. Shouting 'Fore!' is embarrassing. It is tantamount to broadcasting to all within earshot that you've just hit an absolute rotter of a shot. Who'd want to do that?

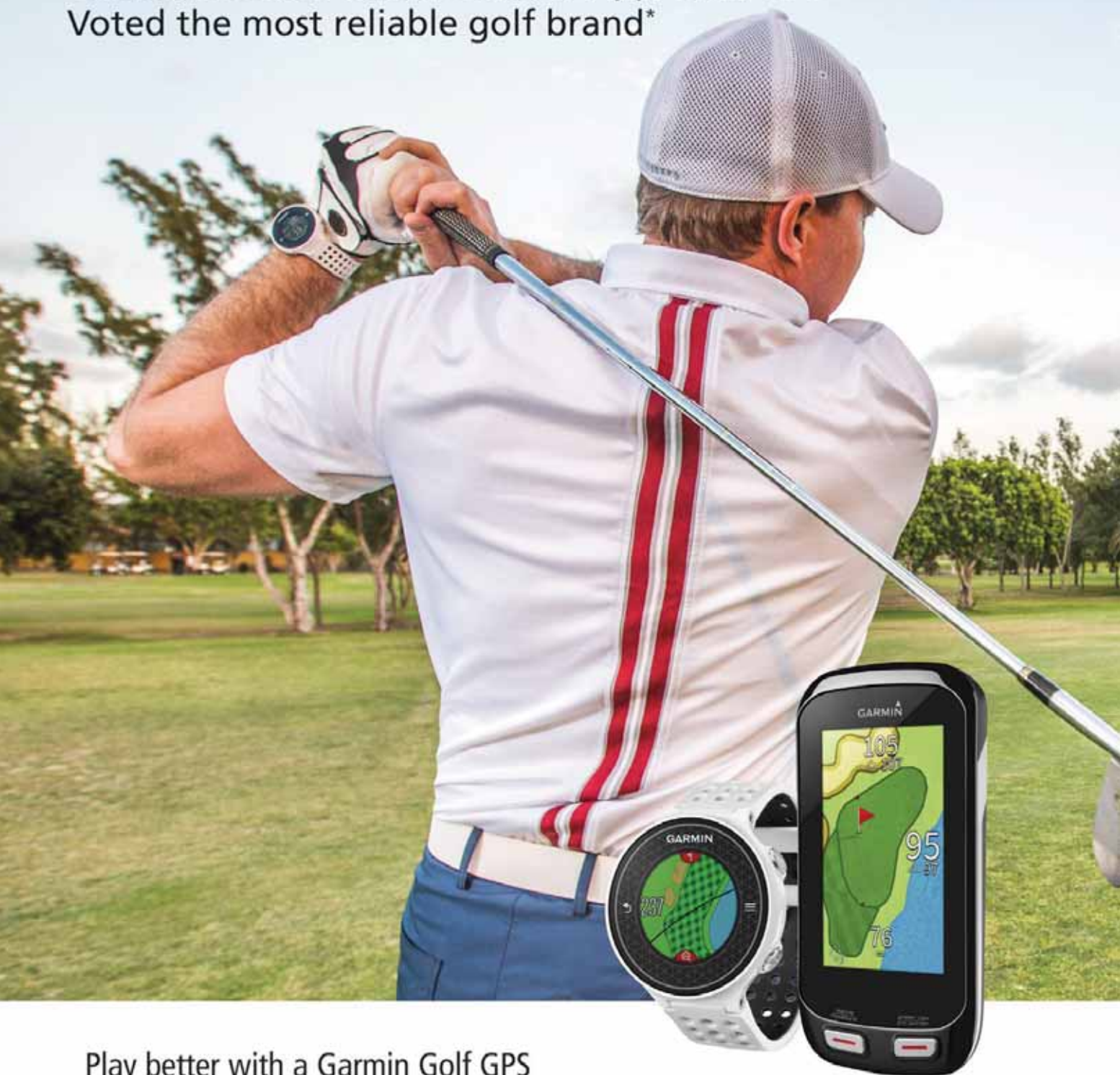
But what's the alternative? Seriously injuring someone? Perhaps even killing them?

The players on tour have a responsibility to not only look out for spectators but set an example for them, too. What people see, they'll copy and, over the last few years, I've already seen more outstretched arms and shut mouths on golf courses than I care to acknowledge with a number.

The wheel of influence starts on the tour. Shout 'Fore!', protect your audience and maybe, just maybe, all the useless arm pointing and glove signing will stop.

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TUITION

Get a better view of the hole

Stand taller over lag putts and you'll see more of what's going on

LESSON TIME

David Patrick
PGA Professional, teaches at Kingsfield Golf Range. For lessons, call David on 07773 427 233. Follow him on **Twitter** at @shortgamedoctor

Good lag putting will go a long way to saving you some shots - and there are a couple of things you can do to improve this part of your game.

I always think that the reason people struggle with long putts, or lag putting, is that they traditionally don't take the putter far enough back so don't have enough energy in the club through impact. They also tend not to have a good enough

view of the whole putt in terms of their eyesight and what they're seeing in the shot.

Think about it. **If you stand taller, you can actually see more of what's going on.** By being taller, you are also more of an arc so you're more likely to be a bit more flowing. If you are too hunched over, it's harder to swing and get good tempo and smooth power in your putt.

On TV, it's hard to fully appreciate how far back tour

players take the putter but bear in mind, when you're watching TV, the greens these guys are playing on are much faster than what you would experience on a 'normal' golf course.

I'd like to see amateur golfers use their eyes more often (this is easier to do when you stand a bit taller), be a bit more athletic and just react to the putt, rather than try to force the shot. Use your instinct a bit more on these putts. — BY DAVID PATRICK



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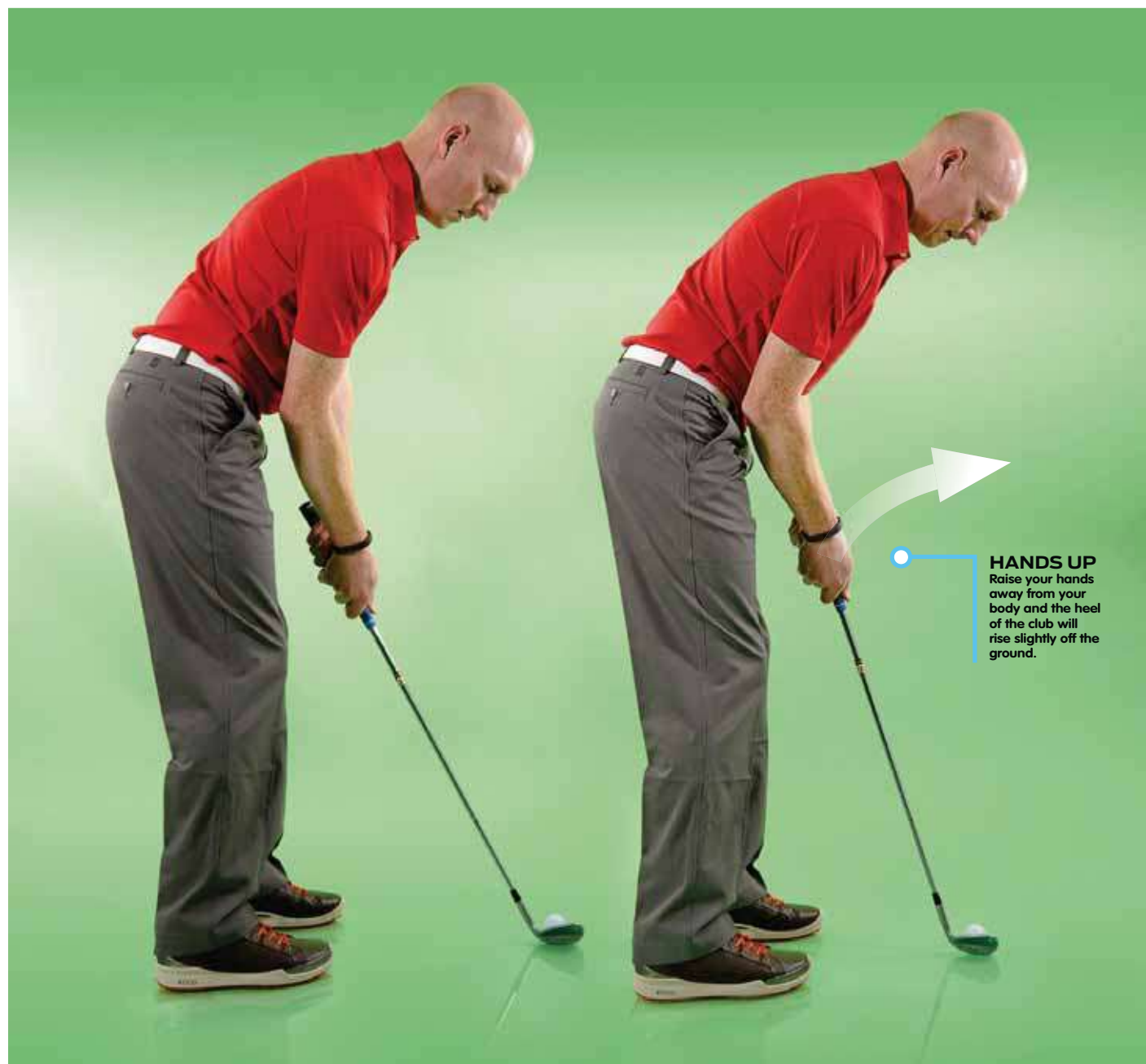


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HANDS UP
Raise your hands away from your body and the heel of the club will rise slightly off the ground.

LESSON TIME

Steve Johnston is the PGA professional at Peebles GC. For lessons, call Steve on 01721 720197. Follow him on **Twitter** @mrstevejohnston

TUITION

Chip with the club's toe down

Get the club more on the toe for a softer shot with less spin

People sometimes struggle with a simple chip shot because they get aggressive and try to help the ball up into the air. Other times, they simply use the wrong club. I suggest trying to get a bit of loft on there to begin with.

Instead of getting a wee 8-iron on it, get a bit of loft on the shot. People get into trouble with this kind of shot as they attempt to scoop the ball up,

so they tend to swing flat around their body. But if we get the club more on the toe, with a more upright shaft, it's almost like a putt where you're striking it off the toe.

But remember: if you strike it off the toe, it's not going to come off the golf club too aggressively. It's going to have a softer feel to it, with less spin. It'll be a bit like a chip and run with a more upright swing plane. You can tell it straight away. You will feel

more in your putting position, and you could even use your putting grip.

There are also advantages in using this technique on, say, the fringe of the green, or in slightly thicker grass because there's less clubhead mass getting potentially stuck. You don't really want the club going straight into the ground after impact. Now, the clubhead is much more upright - and it's so easy to play.

— BY STEVE JOHNSTON

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LESSON TIME

Kevin Craggs has coached Monty & others. Now works with Catriona Matthew & Chris Doak. For lessons, call him on 08451 303 433. Follow him on **Twitter** @kevincraggsgolf

TUITION

Set up around the clubface

Find yourself a set-up routine and stick to it rigidly

I've just had an incident with a young pro who said that, in practice, he can do it easily but, on the course, it feels a bit different. Everyone has been there at some point when it comes to their golf: you go to the range and it feels great; you go onto the tee and you feel like a different guy. What happens between that walk?

The difference between amateurs and pros is not just that their 'A' game or 'B' game is much better, it's that their 'C' game is, too. The reason is that they stick to their processes

and routines. Ask yourself what your routine is. How long does it take? Has it got a script and, more importantly, do you do it over every shot?

I'm not asking you to take longer. I'm just asking whether you do the same thing with every shot. **Lots of people start off with good intentions but as soon as they have a bogey or something goes wrong, everything changes.**

TRY THIS

The swing revolves around the set-up. Pick a spot, go in and

place your clubface aligned to an intermediate spot in front of the ball (it's easier to line that up). Build your stance around the clubface, not the opposite. Poor alignment comes from aligning around your stance.

Using a driver, I'll take a good strong stance with the centre of my feet a good shoulder-width apart, the ball positioned in line with my left heel and my right shoulder slightly lower than my left as it helps me create an upward strike on the ball. This is my routine every single time, without fail. – BY KEVIN CRAGGS

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In his own words, the former world No.1 and 23-time winner on the European Tour talks us through his game, the game & more

AS TOLD TO MICHAEL McEWAN PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES / SUPPLIED

❖ GEAR & TECHNIQUE

I HAVE TWO MAIN SWING THOUGHTS: one for my takeaway and another for the first movement on the downswing to set the club in the right position.

I PREFER A LIGHT SHAFT. The one in my driver is 60g. I find I get more feel in the head from it. Everyone's different, though. Darren [Clarke] prefers a heavy shaft but I grew up using the PING JZ-Lite and things like that, so it's what I'm accustomed to.

I'M NOT PARTICULARLY GOOD AT DRAWING THE BALL. You'd think, as a former world No.1, I'd be able to do it, wouldn't you?

SOMETIMES I CARRY FOUR WEDGES but, depending on the course, I might take that down to three. On links courses, for example, you can usually work around the gaps in your wedges but at, say, a US Open, you don't really want to have big gaps so I would typically put an extra wedge in the bag at the expense of my 3-iron.

MY 2-IRON IS ACTUALLY A 3-IRON. I don't think PING make 2-irons anymore so they took a 3 and bent it to my specifications. If you look at the sole of



it, you'll see a '3' on the toe and a '2' further along. That confuses Billy [Foster, his caddie] from time to time!

THE LAST TIME I HIT A 1-IRON? I couldn't tell you. I used to carry one but that was ages ago. I think the last player I saw carrying one in their bag was maybe [Jose Maria] Olazabal. Santiago Luna and Sandy Lyle, too.

I DON'T USE TRACKMAN A LOT. I do most of my yardages with a Bushnell laser. I send Billy out onto the range and he lasers back at the me after I've hit five or six balls with every club in the bag and we work out my yardages from there. I like Trackman but I don't

fall back on it all that often. I find lasers are much more reliable.

I CHECK MY DISTANCES WITH MY WEDGES MAYBE TWO OR THREE TIMES A YEAR. They can weaken just because of the amount that you use them, so I like to keep an eye on how they're performing.

MY CLUBHEAD SPEED WITH MY DRIVER IS AROUND ABOUT 118MPH if I give it the full treatment. When I swing it, you'll hopefully notice I don't ever try and hit the ball particularly hard. I'm a big believer in just maintaining a nice rhythm. Whether it's a driver I'm hitting or an 8-iron, I try to put the same swing on every club in my bag.

THE BUSHNELL LASERS ARE THE BEST ON THE MARKET. They're the most accurate. They have the best technology and the 'jolt' is especially good. It gives you the confidence that you've got the yardage absolutely spot-on. The more accurate information I can have, the easier my job is.

I THINK IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME before we use DMDs in tournament play. I'm pretty good at eyeballing it, though. It's not often I'm more than five yards out guessing a yardage by eye. ►

❖ LIFE ON TOUR

I ENJOY PLAYING IN THE STATES. The golf courses there are probably a little bit better manicured than they are in Europe. They should be, though, because they get such better weather conditions over there. There are no excuses for having a course in the US that isn't in good nick. Having said that, I enjoy coming back and playing in front of a home crowd.

IT'S DIFFICULT FOR EUROPEANS TO GO OVER TO THE PGA TOUR and compete straight away because the American boys have been brought up playing those types of courses and in those conditions, so they're much more used to it. But I think we manage to give a good account of ourselves.

DEFINITELY, IT WOULD BE GREAT TO SEE THE TOP AMERICANS supporting events over here. It is disappointing that the BMW PGA Championship isn't better supported. By the same token, I know how difficult it is for them to get released from their commitments to the PGA Tour. It's not easy.

I SEEM TO PLAY WELL WHEN IT'S HOT AND HUMID. I've obviously won quite a lot in Asia, where the conditions are like that more often than not, and the two wins I've had in the States have been in similar weather, too.

IT'S GREAT TO SEE SO MUCH LINKS ON THE SCHEDULE THIS YEAR. It's the purest form of the game. You need a lot of imagination to play it and you tend to see the better ball-strikers do well, the guys who are the best technicians, if you like. The cream tends to rise to the top on a links course.

I TRY NOT TO PLAY MORE THAN FOUR TOURNAMENTS IN A ROW. Any more than that and you start to get mentally drained. You want to keep the enthusiasm levels up. There's nothing worse than turning up to an event feeling tired and thinking to yourself, 'What am I doing here?' You want to be fresh, keen and ready to go.

I DO GYM WORK FAIRLY REGULARLY. Weights, shoulder-stability, flexibility, that sort of thing. Running on a treadmill or sitting in a bike in a gym bores me to tears but I'm in not bad shape for a 42-year-old all things considered! I used to have a gym at home but not any more.

THE BEST MOMENTS OF MY CAREER? That's a tough call. Probably getting to world No.1, beating Greg Norman in a play-off to win the Australian Open in 1997, and the last day at Medinah in 2012.

THE WORST MOMENT? The last day at Brookline in 1999.

■ Westwood has won 23 times on the European Tour since 1996



❖ GOLF IN THE OLYMPICS

IT'S GOING TO BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW PEOPLE EMBRACE GOLF IN THE OLYMPICS. I think the players are all keen to play and it will be good for golf, both in terms of funding and bringing it to a wider audience.

MAJORS WILL ALWAYS BE THE HIGHEST ACCOLADE YOU CAN WIN AS A GOLFER. But, again, you look at the tennis players. The Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open are always going to be the biggest

events in their sport but they've embraced being part of the Olympics and you only need to see how proud they are when they win a medal to realise how big it could be for golf.

I WASN'T KEEN ON IT AT FIRST but watching a few opening ceremonies and seeing Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer and LeBron James all taking part, it changed my opinion of it. If it means that much to those guys, maybe it should mean that much to golfers, too.



❖ THE RYDER CUP

THE RYDER CUP IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE 'WEEK IN, WEEK OUT' STUFF. You have to adapt to a form of golf - matchplay team golf - that we're not particularly used to playing and you have to adapt to it quickly, but it's nice to get to know a lot of the other players and their families and friends. It's a really good 'bonding' week.

IT SOUNDS OBVIOUS but there's more pressure involved than there is with a regular event. You're trying to win points for yourself, for your teammates, for everybody else there cheering you on and for all of the people watching at home on TV. Most people seem to cope pretty well with it, though.

I THINK THE AMERICANS ARE GOING TO HAVE A REALLY STRONG SIDE IN 2016. They've got a lot of really good young players emerging. It's going to be a very interesting match.

I THOUGHT DAVIS LOVE III WAS A GREAT CAPTAIN for the US in the 2012 match at Medinah. He was a little unfortunate on the final day but, had things been slightly different, I think he might have been regarded as one of the best US captains of the last 30 or so years.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A GOOD CAPTAIN. They can affect the way that the players are thinking and, obviously, he also has to get his pairings right. It's a key role.

WHAT DO I THINK IS THE STRONGEST PAIRING THE AMERICANS HAVE? Possibly Rickie Fowler and Jimmy Walker. Both are great players, they clearly get on well and they gel pretty well together, too. I mean, yeah, I know they didn't win a match at Gleneagles but they played great and are still a pair of guys that you'd expect to do well.

MOMENTUM IS EVERYTHING IN FOURSOMES GOLF. If you get it going against you, it's very hard to turn it around. That's the problem with only playing every second shot.

❖ HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH BILLY FOSTER

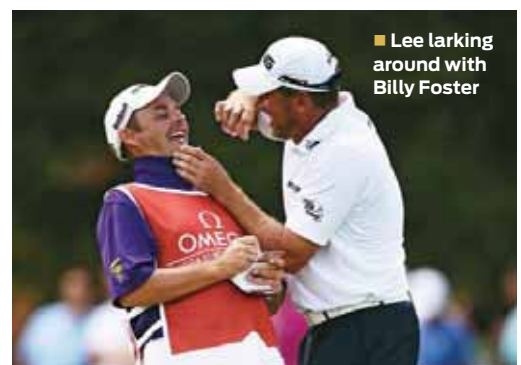
HOW DOES OUR RELATIONSHIP WORK? He tells me what he thinks and then we decide that I'm right!

I DON'T CARRY A YARDAGE BOOK. I leave that to him, that's his domain. He generally gets it right, too. We don't make mistakes with our clubbing very often.

WHAT'S THE MOST BIZARRE THING HE'S GIVEN ME A YARDAGE TO? Probably a woman in the crowd.

BILLY CADDIED FOR SEVE THE TIME HE HIT THAT INCREDIBLE SHOT FROM BEHIND THE WALL IN SWITZERLAND. He says he said to him, "I know you're Seve Ballesteros but you're not Paul Daniels!" The rest is history: Seve takes out the sand iron, somehow hits it to just short of the green and then chips in for birdie. Incredible.

I ALWAYS SAY long or short, it's Billy's fault; left or right, it's the coach's fault!



EXCLUSIVE

‘I’M NOT JUST TIGER’S NIECE’

Cheyenne Woods is proud of her famous uncle but is equally determined to step out of his shadow

WORDS MICHAEL McEWAN PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Presumably, most conversations with Cheyenne Woods start like this: with an apology. “I’m sorry to have to do this,” I begin, “but I have to ask you about your uncle.” Cheyenne manages an expectant smile, a smile that says, ‘Yep, thought so’. Her uncle, of course, is former world No.1 Tiger Woods.

You thought Tiger was an only child, didn’t you? Wrong. Sure, he was the only child born to his father Earl Woods and his second wife Kultida Punsawad, but he has three half-siblings from his dad’s first marriage to Barbara Gray: Earl Dennison Junior, Kevin Dale and Royce Renee.

Earl Junior is Cheyenne’s dad, making 14-time major winner Tiger her uncle.

Currently in her rookie season on the LPGA, Cheyenne admits she is growing weary of the questions about her famous relative but, equally, understands why they get asked.

“I guess it is a little frustrating that people always want to talk to me about him,” she shrugs. “But I’m used to it by now. It’s part of the routine pretty much ▶





► every week going from tournament to tournament. He's one of the biggest names in sports history, so I get it.

"We probably speak every few months. Not too often. He keeps up with how I'm doing and checks in every once in a while to see how I'm doing, which is pretty cool. We'll talk about golf and how each of us is getting on. It's good to have somebody like that to talk to and bounce ideas around with."

Like Tiger, Cheyenne was introduced to golf by Earl - her grandfather, Tiger's dad. Whereas he coached Tiger from an early age, however, he was considerably less involved in Cheyenne's game.

"He never really coached me," reveals the 25-year-old. "He got me started, introduced me to the game and gave me my first set of clubs but I only really went on the golf course with him twice. Most of the time that I spent with him was at his house. We had more of a 'grandfather-granddaughter' relationship than a 'coach-student' relationship."

History has cast Earl as a determined, almost overbearing influence on Tiger's career. "Tiger will do more than any other man in history to change the course of humanity," he rather outrageously claimed when his son turned professional in 1996. In a May 2000 interview, he declared: "I knew Tiger was special the day he was born" and, on other occasion, insisted that Tiger had a golf swing 'when he got out of the high chair'. You get the picture.

How does Cheyenne remember him, though? "He was the most interesting man I've ever met," she recalls. "He knew everything about everything. He had been thought so much in his life that some of his stories were just incredible. He was great to talk to and, above all else, a fantastic grandfather. He was just a wonderful man."



CHEYENNE NICOLE WOODS was born on July 25, 1990. She first picked up a golf club at the age of three - hitting shots in the same garage where a young Tiger also had his first introduction to golf - and was she was six by the time her uncle won the Masters by 12 shots in 1997, bagging his first major in the process.

He had won five more by the time Cheyenne's first victory of note came along. She won the 10-and-under division of the Southwest PGA's Junior State Championship in 2001, cantering to a ten-shot victory over her opponents at Antelope Hills in Arizona.

She was back in the winner's circle just a week later, taking the girls' nine- and ten-year-old division of the inaugural US Kids Golf World Championship by four shots.

The weight, therefore, of the 'Woods' name clearly never weighed heavy around her neck.

"You know, it maybe did a little in the beginning," she admits. "But I quickly got used to it and you soon learn to not care what people think and not get too worked up by the comparisons people might draw between you."

"I've got my own individual goals and things that I want to accomplish in the game, so I'm not about to compare myself to Tiger. Other people do and that's fine, that's up to them, but I'm just going to focus on doing my own thing and not let anything like that get to me."

Cheyenne admits, though, that being Tiger's niece often went before her

not true in the slightest. But I don't care. It's part and parcel of the job. I'm me and Tiger's Tiger. We're related and we both play golf. I can see why some people might think we're going to be really similar but we're two different people."

So, what is Cheyenne Woods really like?

"I think I'm a pretty laid back person," she says. "When I'm not competing, I enjoy going home to relax and spend time with my friends. I enjoy going hiking and get out in the countryside almost every day. I love to run and work out, too, getting my nails done and all that sort of thing. Nothing too exciting or too taxing. I

■ **Cheyenne made her professional debut in Scotland in this year's Aberdeen Asset Management Ladies Scottish Open**



'PEOPLE HAD AN ASSUMPTION OF WHAT I'D BE LIKE. A BAD ASSUMPTION. THEY'D SAY 'SHE'S THIS' OR 'SHE'S THAT''

when meeting new people in the golf industry.

"Most of the girls that I played golf with I grew up with so they knew me for me," she adds. "It was funny, though, when I went to college and I first met my teammates. They had an assumption of what I would be like. A bad assumption. I'd hear people say, 'She's this' or 'She's that' or 'She acts this way' but, if you know me, you know I'm not like that at all."

"It's funny the way people assume that, because you have a famous name or a famous connection, that you're going to have these linked characteristics or whatever and it's just not the case. It's

like going to gigs, too. My favourite artist is Drake and I was able to go to his concert in Toronto a few months ago and meet him, which was just awesome. So, things like that really. I'd say I'm pretty normal."



ASKED WHAT SHE most wants to achieve in golf, Cheyenne is as emphatic as she is unequivocal.

"I want to be an LPGA major champion. This is my rookie year on tour and I'm learning how to win, what it takes to be a success in the game and be at the top consistently because that's where I want to be. I want to have that No.1 world ►

EXCLUSIVE * CHEYENNE WOODS





■ Clockwise from left: Cheyenne at the top of the Burj al Arab in Dubai; Playing on the LPGA; An 11-year-old Cheyenne in action.



► ranking." Sound familiar? All the signs are that she has every chance of fulfilling those goals. Her first victory on a major women's golf tour came along in February 2014 when she won the Volvik RACV Ladies Masters on the Ladies European Tour.

"That was really exciting," she smiles. "To have that win under my belt and to do it on the LET was awesome. It was a great feeling and it definitely helped me get that confidence that you need in professional golf. To know you can be in that position and close out the win is great."

She ended last year by finishing in a tie for 11th at the 90-hole LPGA Q-School, earning one of the 20 cards on offer in the process. She is, in simple terms, on track.

Beyond getting to world No.1 and winning majors, she also has her sights set on representing her country in a couple of high-profile team events.

"I'd love to play the Solheim Cup and it would be amazing to play in the Olympics, too," she says. "I definitely would love to be a part of that time in the future. Playing on behalf of the USA at any event would be such an amazing honour but particularly at the Olympics. For golf to now be a part of it is definitely special."

"I've always loved playing team golf. It

was great fun in college. Just being able to represent something that is bigger than you, it's an incredible opportunity. The Olympics certainly fits that bill. It's something that not many people ever really get the chance to be a part of and particularly in golf where we spend so much time playing, mainly, as individuals. I think it's awesome golf is part of it."

Cheyenne recently had her first experience of playing in Scotland, too, when she teed it up in the Aberdeen Asset Management Ladies Scottish Open. Playing alongside former Scotland and British Lions rugby captain Gavin Hastings, she narrowly missed the cut but, by all accounts, appeared to enjoy the experience.

"The courses in Scotland are always fun to play," she says. "I love a challenge and links golf is always that. It was actually my third visit to Scotland. I'd played at Kingsbarns and a few other places around St Andrews when I was in high school."

She has, however, stopped short of trying any of the local 'delicacies' on offer. "I've heard all about haggis," she laughs. "But the way that people explained it, it wasn't very tempting. I'm always down to try new stuff but maybe not that." ■

FACT FILE

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHEYENNE WOODS

PERSONAL

Full Name
Cheyenne Nicole Woods

D.O.B.
July 25, 1990

Birthplace
Phoenix, AZ

Twitter
@Cheyenne_Woods

IN THE BAG

Driver
VAPOR Speed (11.5°)

Fairway Woods
Covert 2.0 (15°)
VAPOR Speed (19°)

Hybrids
Covert (23°)

Irons
VAPOR PC (5-PW)

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TUITION

RIP YOUR IRONS LIKE JUSTIN ROSE

Learn how the Englishman pures it

Justin Rose is someone I have got a lot of respect and admiration for. I just love watching him play the game and the way he manoeuvres his ball around the golf course. He plays his own game. How he conducts himself both on and off the course is something everyone can learn a lot from. He's a model professional and it's no surprise he's been signed up as an ambassador for England Golf to try and get more kids playing the game. He's a great role model for kids to copy. From a playing point of view, he has so many attributes, particularly when it comes to his iron play. I've outlined a few things I like about his approach to irons to give you an idea of his classic style and why it works.

— BY GAVIN ABSON

NATURAL POSTURE

TEXTBOOK SET-UP

■ What I really like about Justin Rose is that he's always set-up in what I would call 'picture perfect' posture. The angles he presets at address are very athletic. As a guide, and something for you to copy, a line drawn from your knees down to the ground should pass through your laces. Bending at the hips and allowing the spine to retain its natural curve is key to being in good posture. The arms and hands should hang naturally underneath the shoulders from this position.

NATURAL

Having fantastic postures allows your hands to hang naturally underneath the shoulders. And because it's natural, it feels natural, so it's more repeatable. Posture is extremely important when it comes to solid iron play. It has a huge impact on balance within the swing and balance is a key ingredient to hitting solid shots. Whenever you see Justin hitting irons, you never see him off-balance - but he can still generate a significant amount of power. It looks solid and it is solid.



GET CENTERED

CLASSIC LINES

■ Justin's swing is quite orthodox in terms of the way the club moves around his body. He passes through positions which you would see in textbooks and hear commentators speak favourably of. During his backswing, he remains very centred over the ball and doesn't allow his weight to shift too much laterally - this, I believe, is a key ingredient to hitting solid iron shots, as it allows him to control the lowest point of his swing.

GOOD TURN

We don't want to go too much into the right side... you just want to turn into the right side. If you move laterally into your right side, it paves the way to inconsistency, possibly hitting it heavy. But if you can stay over the golf ball when you turn, it allows your angle of attack to be much better. When Justin gets to the top, it looks like he's got a lot of time and a lot of room to maintain his width. He doesn't seem to be in rush to get back down to the golf ball.

LESSON TIME

Gavin Abson is the Head PGA Professional at The Carrick. For lessons, call Gavin on 07967 206266. Follow him on **Twitter** @GavinAbsonGolf

IMPACT

ALWAYS HIT DOWN

■ Justin is able to hit down on the golf ball and get his hands working ahead of the club because of his centred position at the top. Having that good angle into the back of the ball determines your strike. Again, for an iron, you want to hit down into the ball. With a driver, you'd hit up. Irons are always down.

EXTEND YOUR LEFT ARM

The biggest thing here is that the left arm, Justin's lead arm, is straight at impact, and fully extended. People often let their left arm collapse and bend, and that will stop you from hitting down on the ball. This fault is often called 'chicken wing'. Keep it straight and that helps you hit down on the ball for better ball-striking.

KEEP IT STRAIGHT

To make sure you hit down on the ball, keep your left arm straight through impact.



GET INSURED Case Study No.6: 'The Golf Bag Theft'

The latest in our series of real life incidents that illustrate why golf insurance is so important

■ THE INCIDENT

In February 2015, Dominic Ham was playing a round of golf with a friend at his home club. They briefly left their bags unattended, during which time a thief struck, stealing both of their golf bags and everything within them.

■ THE BACKGROUND

Dominic had been a member at Wenvoe Castle GC, near Cardiff, for ten years when the incident took place. That particular day was quiet, with hardly anybody else on the course. Wenvoe Castle, meanwhile, has quite a remote location, sitting in the heart of Vale of Glamorgan, ten miles from the centre of Cardiff.

■ WHAT HAPPENED?

On the ninth hole of their round, Dominic and his friend left their golf bags to play the next hole. Once you finish the tenth, you have to double back on yourself to the 11th, so it's quite common for players to leave their bags. When they returned, they discovered that both of their bags had gone. They had been gone no more than ten minutes. At first, they thought it was a joke but quickly realised it wasn't. They immediately reported the theft at the clubhouse and the club called the police who arrived 15 minutes later to investigate.

■ THE NEED FOR INSURANCE

Unfortunately, neither bag was recovered. Dominic's alone had a value of around £2,000 as it contained, not only golf clubs, but waterproofs, a GPS, a rangefinder and other accessories, too.

Dominic, meanwhile, had only recently bought a new car, so he was immediately very concerned that the car keys were in the bag. Fortunately, he found them in his pocket, although a locker in the clubhouse would also have been a good option.

"The police were helpful," explained Dominic. "However, nothing was found."

Luckily, Dominic had recently taken out Golf Care golf insurance and was able to replace his stolen gear quickly.

"My claim handler was very helpful," he added. "All in, it took less than four weeks from having my equipment stolen



"A LOT OF GOLFERS THINK THEIR GEAR IS COVERED UNDER THEIR HOME INSURANCE"

to having it replaced. As a result of all this, a few of my friends have also taken out insurance from Golf Care."

The incident also prompted the golf club to email its members to inform them of what happened and to recommend they take out insurance.

A lot of golfers mistakenly think golf equipment is covered under their household insurance policies but, often, that's not the case. Some policies may cover your equipment when it's in your house but the minute you move it off property - such as into your car or onto the golf course - it is no longer covered.

It is, therefore, advisable to have a golf insurance policy to ensure you receive compensation should you become a victim of theft, club loss, or damage. Golf Care's golf club replacement cover is on a 'New for Old' basis for items purchased new and up to three-years-old, subject

to satisfactory proof of ownership. Items older than three years or not purchased new are replaced on the indemnity value of that equipment at the time of loss.

■ IN SUMMARY

Golf clubs and golf equipment are extremely valuable and, therefore, carry a high risk of theft. A Golf Care insurance policy will cover you in the event that you are the unwitting victim of some opportunistic criminal and will have you back on the course in next to no time.

■ **Golf Care is offering bunkered readers a special offer which includes 30% off the standard price of an individual policy, three free rounds of golf, three free Srixon AD333 balls and a limited edition poker chip ball marker for just £22.99 a year. Visit www.golfcare.co.uk/BKED or call 0800 158 5515.**

'GOING BY THE BOOK, TIGER SHOULD BE 100/1'

Paul Petrie, co-founder of McBookie, gives us an insight to the world of golf betting and odds setting

WORDS CRAIG DENNETT PHOTOS PSP MEDIA / GETTY IMAGES

Enjoying a flutter on your favourite sport is a long held tradition for fans in the UK and gambling is one of the very few industries that has continued to grow throughout the recession.

Why so? Well, McBookie co-founder Paul Petrie says the easiness of gambling and the introduction of apps in recent years has all contributed.

An avid sports fan, Petrie always had an interest in gambling, but it wasn't something he ever considered a career in. That was until he left his London PR job to move to Manchester and take up a new role at Totesport. After spending several years learning the inner workings of the industry, Petrie saw a gap in the market due to what he describes as a 'lack of experience in Scottish sport' from the wider known British bookmakers.

Seven years on, McBookie is continuing to go from strength to strength and has built a solid core of Scottish customers on which it can depend on and tailor its odds to suit.

Golf is no different from any of the other sports McBookie offers markets on in that regard, and is actually one of the top four sports it receives bets on.

"Understanding Scottish sport and Scottish customers are the two key things for the McBookie brand," says Petrie. "Because we are independent, we can make decisions that are more customer-friendly than the bigger companies."

When it comes to setting odds, McBookie works closely with another bookmaker that provides feeds for independent firms to be able to tailor the odds specifically for their Scottish market. This is an aspect that normally works in their favour but could have worked significantly against them had there been success for either Marc Warren or Paul

there thinking this is going to be a disaster.

"Lawrie was 300/1 at the start of the tournament and people were chucking £1 or £2 on him, while Marc Warren was still out at 150/1 at the start of the week despite doing well at the Scottish Open the week before. They fell away, though, so I could relax a bit more on the Sunday."

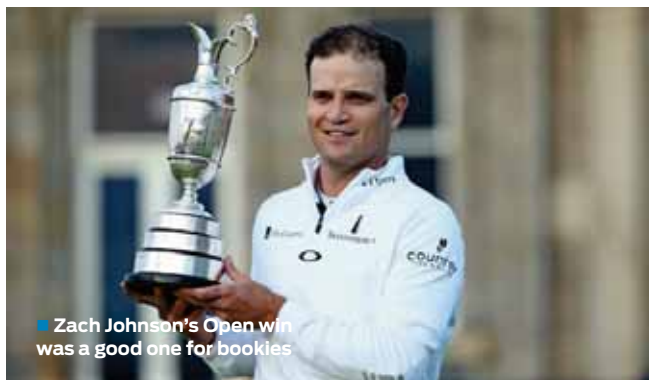
we got to the point where we didn't want too much more placed on him, so we shortened the odds to lower than our competitors so fewer people see him as being worth a punt.

"At the start of the Open, we only had ten bets on Zach Johnson in total. It was a fantastic result for us because people were using the same logic as our odds compilers.

"A good result in golf is when you've got the guy who doesn't normally perform well, doesn't hit the guidelines of who should be performing well at a particular course, but goes on to win. If it's the guy who is tipped up by all of the tipsters, ticks all the boxes and has good course form, it's going to be a losing week."

As an independent bookmaker, McBookie outsources a lot of its work. The majority of its odds come from a feed, and Petrie explains that the bookmaker the feed comes from will have 'about three or four guys' who work specifically on golf. Those are the odds compilers, who will position players where they feel is appropriate for the week ahead.

But what do you do about Tiger? Having been injured at the end of last year and showing little sign of any form throughout this year, the bookmakers had tough decisions to make. At the start of the year, particularly at the Masters, Woods was still priced as one of the favourites, and Petrie says he was still being priced so low because people were still prepared to back him. ▶



▶ Zach Johnson's Open win was a good one for bookies

'A SCOTTISH WIN WOULD HAVE BEEN A DISASTER FOR US'

Lawrie at this year's Open Championship.

"From our perspective, the Scottish guys were an absolute nightmare because people back them and they were sitting first and second on the leaderboard going into the weekend," explained Petrie. "Lawrie and Warren were our two biggest losers for the week, the ones we'd lose the most money on. Most people were saying a Scottish win would be a great result for the bookies and I'm sitting

In simple terms, big name winners are bad for bookies, and first-time winners are great news. In between all of that, though, it's about managing liabilities for the bookies.

"When it comes to setting the odds before the start of a tournament, you can change the odds appropriately to suit your liabilities. For example, heading into the Open, a lot of money had been placed on Jordan Spieth to win. As the tournament drew closer,



■ Paul Petrie,
co-founder of McBookie



■ Mickelson was a popular choice for the 2013 Open



■ YE Yang's 2009 triumph was celebrated by bookies

► He said: "Admittedly he was getting pushed out later in the season but he was still only about 33/1 for the Open. Regardless of his form, you know he's got the capability to potentially come back, so we can't position him where his form says he should be.

"Going by the book, he should be a 100/1 shot, but if you put him in at that price, your liabilities will quickly be hitting £1m. All you have to do is look at the Quicken Loans event. He was sitting two off the lead heading into the weekend. Imagine you had priced him at 100/1 in a major and he puts in that performance in the first two rounds.

"With a lot of these better players, you're still edging on the side of caution, mainly because people will still be prepared to back him. Even when I was sitting there

getting ready to put my bets on, I was thinking 'Tiger might win this!' To date he's won 77 PGA Tour titles but those wins were across only 25 events. He had already won at St Andrews twice, too. I was convincing myself that he could do it. Thankfully, I never followed through on it."

For McBookie, there are five big tournaments for golf betting. Number one is the Open, number two is the Masters, and then you have the Scottish Open, US Open and USPGA all on a level playing field. The bookies have had some big wins over the years but they've also had some massive losses. It was in 2013 McBookie's worst golf finish occurred.

"When Phil Mickelson won at Muirfield, that was an awful result for us," said Petrie. "He had won the Scottish Open the week before, nobody had ever

done the double, but people had backed him to win at Castle Stuart and reinvested their winnings on him for the Open. We already had a massive liability on him before the tournament even began.

"The recreational punter had watched the Scottish Open, seen him win, saw he was on form and placed a bet on him.

"Some people had even placed bets on the double for him to win both the Scottish Open and Open, then I think going into the final day he was about 16/1 to win and people were piling on that because they were looking for value. It wasn't a good day for us.

"On the other hand, we've had a few good days, too. Zach Johnson at the Open this year was a result. YE Yang winning the 2009 PGA Championship and Lucas Glover winning the US Open that same year were great for us, too.

"You're always going to have both happen over the years, we just need to make sure we are on top more than we're not." ■

'MICKELSON'S 2013 OPEN WIN WAS OUR WORST RESULT'

BEWARE! THE DEAD HEAT RULE

■ "People don't understand how it works when we're paying out for players finishing in the top-six and then five guys finish in a tie for sixth place and they end up winning £3," explained Petrie.

"It is quite complicated and you can understand why the recreational punters are a bit miffed by it all. If you're paying four places and three guys finish in that fourth spot, you've got to half your odds or half your stake.

"So, if you put £10 on, you're actually only winning what you would get if you put £5 on because you've shared the place with someone else. When you're looking at the four places,

it's not so bad but, when you're looking six and seven places, I think for the Open, there were four guys sharing sixth place, so you've then got to calculate that you're only then getting a fraction of your stake, and then some people will have only put it on each way. In some cases, people backed Justin Rose each way at 14/1 and were only getting £1 back.

"That's less than they put on because they lost their win part and they also lost four-fifths of their each-way part, so then we get loads of guys complaining that they've not got any money to show for it."

BETTING IN NUMBERS

73

The percentage of adults in Britain who bet at least once a year.

300m

The amount, in pounds, bet on the 2015 Grand National. It's the UK's largest event for betting.

214k

The number of people currently employed in the gambling industry in the UK.

9k

The number of betting shops currently operating in the UK.

0

The amount of tax the government requires to be paid on gambling winnings.

70

The total percentage of money bet on all sports around the world that is wagered on football.

6.8bn

The size, in pounds, of the UK gambling market in 2014.

T6	-11	WILLETT, Danny
T6	-11	ROSE, Justin
T6	-11	GARCIA, Sergio
T6	-11	NIEBRUGGE, Jordan (a)

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EXCLUSIVE

FROM THE FRONTLINE TO THE FAIRWAY

How do you return to normality when you have been scarred - physically and mentally - by the horrors of war? For members of the On Course Foundation, golf is proving to be the answer

WORDS MICHAEL McEWAN PHOTOS LIAM REID / SUPPLIED

Taking cover from Taliban gunfire in a squalid irrigation ditch, blood oozing from the bullet wound in his knee, David Sneddon's mind is consumed by one thought: "There's no way I'm dying in this shithole." It was 2010. A commander in 1st Battalion, the Royal Scots Borderers, David was leading an early evening patrol in Nad-e Ali, a district of Helmand Province in Afghanistan. It was a routine security detail, one that he and his team had performed countless times before without incident. Until that night.

"It was a pleasant enough evening," David recalls. "But just as we set off, my sniper went over on his ankle. I asked him if he was okay to carry on and he said he'd try to walk it off. We cracked on but half an hour later he pulled up again."

Concerned, David radioed for a medic to come and take a look. The ten-man patrol stopped for around 30 minutes whilst the sniper was checked over. They were about to set off again when David realised that the atmosphere in the town had changed.

"Something wasn't right," he says. "You could just feel it. It was really quiet and there were no kids running around like usual. I got on the radio to my bosses and they told us to get back to camp as soon as possible, so I got the guys reorganised and told the first man to move off."

That's when it happened. Opportunist insurgents ambushed the men, raining down a hail of bullets in their direction.

"It's what we call a 'shoot and scoot'," explains David. "They fired a couple of bursts and then scarpered. Of course, we weren't to know that at the time. For all we knew, there was a team of them ready to flank us and go on a full attack."

The man at the front of the patrol got shot through the ankle, whilst David took a bullet to his right knee. "I knew immediately what had happened," he says. "It's a weird sensation. I kept moving, though. Adrenaline kicked in. It's fight or flight, isn't it? So, I jumped into a ditch and called for air assistance."

Forty agonising minutes passed before Apache helicopters flew in to evacuate the men. ►



► "I spent most of that time wondering if this was it," says David, "if I was going to go home to see my wife and my son again or if I was destined to cuff it here and now." Fortunately, help arrived and the injured members of the patrol were taken to Camp Bastion. They spent a couple of days before being flown back to the UK, to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham. Luckily, there were no fatalities. "We all got out of there alive," says David. "That's the most important thing."

His ordeal, though, was far from over. The next two-and-a-half years were spent in and out of hospital. He developed a bad infection in his femur - "in part from the gunshot, in part from whatever stuff was in that ditch" - and ended up requiring a knee replacement. When that failed, he had to get another. When that too failed, he decided enough was enough.

"I just wasn't getting anywhere, so I told them to take my leg," he sighs. "It was a difficult decision. It literally kept me awake at night. But it was definitely the right one."

In 2012, David's right leg was amputated from just above the knee. In that moment, lying on the operating table, everything changed. "I'd been in the army for 18 years, having joined when I was 18," he says. "I had spent half my life there. It was all I knew but, suddenly, it was over and I found myself having to learn to do a lot of things all over again, even simple things like walking."

As he was fitted with a prosthetic limb soon thereafter, David could never have guessed that a new life in golf was in the horizon.



IT'S 1995 AND THE WORLD is reacting to news of the Srebrenica massacre. Under the command of General Ratko Mladic, units of the Bosnian and Serb Army of Republika Srpska (VRS), together with the so-called 'Scorpions' paramilitary unit from Serbia, have executed more than 8,000 Muslim Bosniaks in the town of Srebrenica, a small mountain town in easternmost Bosnia. It is the worst case of genocide on European soil since World War II.

Ges Almond is part of the British deployment that descends upon the devastated town in the immediate aftermath. An electronics engineer in the Royal Air Force, Ges also served in Northern Ireland and Cyprus but says it was his two tours of Bosnia - and, in particular, his visit to Srebrenica - that haunted him long after he returned home.

"Nothing affected me quite like that,"

he recalls. "It was ethnic cleansing on probably the worst scale since the Holocaust."

Remembering the deep-seated anger that he and his fellow troops were subjected to, he reveals: "On one occasion, we were in a supermarket and a little kid pulled a gun on us. Couldn't have been more than five or six-years-old. Another time, two German soldiers were attacked late one night and had everything taken from them. Literally everything. They were left naked and alone in the streets. They were lucky to escape with their lives. You didn't have to look far to find a total stranger who hated you, no matter how much good you were trying to do."

Danger lurked around every corner. "There were land mines everywhere," Ges

adds. "There were areas you'd walk into without realising they were live minefields until you were in them. And when it snowed, it was awful. The snow would melt and wash the mines down into rivers and so on. Unless you were very careful, your next step could have been your last."

He didn't realise it at the time but those experiences were taking a profound toll on Ges' mental health, so much so, in fact, that he developed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"At the time, PTSD wasn't something that people really knew that much about," he says. "You'd come back from a tour of duty and you were always told to decompress, do something to re-balance your scales, if you like. That was about the extent of it."

For Ges, that had been skiing. A qualified ski instructor, escaping to the slopes was the 'ying' to the 'yang' of the horrors of war he had witnessed at much too close quarters. It still wasn't enough, though.

"I came back from two back-to-back tours of Bosnia and returned to work on the base," he says. "I was living on my own in a flat in Watford and was working



■ **Main:** David Sneddon in the greenkeeping shed at Kingsfield Golf Centre. He now works there three days a week after leaving the army. **Right:** Military operations in Afghanistan.

'I JUST WASN'T GETTING ANYWHERE SO I TOLD THEM TO TAKE MY LEG. IT WAS DIFFICULT BUT THE RIGHT DECISION.'



long shifts. I was effectively shutting myself off to the outside world."

The pain of the conflicts he had seen continued to fester deep below the surface until, in September 2012, they burst out in terrifying fashion.

"My team had just finished a big project at RAF Northolt and it was as I left the base and got to Northolt tube station that it all happened," says Ges. "I was waiting on the platform. There was no-one else there and, as the train came into the station, I noticed it was empty. I could hear police sirens in the distance and I panicked. I don't know why but I was convinced I was being chased."

That's when it all goes black. Ges can't recall what happened over the next few hours but his movements were pieced together by the police who were able to trace his steps through his Oyster travel card.

"It seems that I took this really weird route across London," he says. "I was criss-crossing the city in the most random way, presumably because I still thought I was being followed. I ultimately ended up outside Kings Cross station, sitting there on the ground, talking gibberish, smoking

a cigar and with £1,000 cash hanging out my back pocket. To this day, we still don't know where that money came from."

A British Transport police offer came to his aid and, after trying to calm him down, put him a taxi to go back to his flat in Watford.

"I lost it," he says. "I got out of the taxi and went to Kings Cross police station. I wanted to hand myself in because I was convinced I'd done something wrong. We checked my bank account and I hadn't withdrawn anything. How did I get the money? I was getting frantic."

The police officers called paramedics who sedated Ges. "Apparently, my blood pressure was so high they were concerned I was going to flatline."

From there, he was taken to Kings Cross Hospital where events took another strange turn.



AUGUST 26, 2003. It is Alex Hiles' 16th birthday. Twelve days later, he enrolls in the British army.

"It was all I ever wanted to do," he recalls. "My dad and granddad had both

been in the army and I was around 15 when I said to myself, 'You know what? I'm going to do that, too.'"

He decided he wanted to join the parachute regiment - "I didn't want to do it half-arsed" - but was initially rejected on account of being too young and, at nine stone, too light. Still, he wouldn't take no for an answer. Out of a platoon of 56 new recruits who started the training course, only 12 saw it through to the end. Alex was one of them. "A lot of people fell by the wayside," he says. "I wasn't going to let that be me."

He was subsequently deployed on ops in Iraq and it was there, in January 2009, that an innocuous slip ended his career prematurely and changed his life forever.

"We were out on patrol. I stepped off something and just turned my ankle over," he recalls. "At first, I thought I'd sprained it and I just tried to walk it off. It's that army mentality: 'I can walk, I'm fine.'"

Only he wasn't fine. "I remember it being quite painful one time and taking a day off," says Alex. "But, other than that, I just strapped it up and carried on."

Over the next eight months, he ►

EXCLUSIVE * FRONTLINE TO FAIRWAY

► continued to complete regular eight-kilometre patrols carrying heavy kit. Eventually, in August of that year, doctors established that his suspected sprained ankle was, in fact, a broken foot and that the continued wear and tear had done considerable damage.

Alex recalls: "The doctors tried a fixation, which didn't work. They then tried removing some bone but that didn't work either."

His only option was to have his ankle fused. And that meant the end of his army career.

"I was devastated," he says. "Something so simple and silly cost me everything. Besides being medically discharged, I was also left unable to do things like running and so on. It basically stopped me being active."

It's not as though he had many options, however. "The doctors told me that an ankle replacement was off the cards because the technology wasn't good enough so I'd need it re-done every ten years or so. It was either have it fused or elect to have it amputated and that just seemed too extreme to me. Fusion was my only option."

Leaving the army hit Alex hard. "I was going to do a full career," he says. "Get to 40, get out, take the pension - that's all I ever wanted. I never had a contingency plan."

He took a minimum wage job with a security company but worked his way up the ranks to the point that he now reports directly to the company's CEO.

"It's great," he says. "It's not what I'd planned to do but here I am."

He has also found a sport he can play in spite of his injuries. "I never thought I'd hear myself say this," he says, "but I'm absolutely addicted to golf."



DAVID SNEDDON WAS MEDICALLY

discharged last year after completing his rehab. Five years of going up and down to Headley Court had taken its toll and he was ready to start the next phase of his life. It was during one of his trips to the Surrey hospital, however, that he was introduced to the On Course Foundation by a friend.



■ Ges Almond suffered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after tours of duty in Bosnia

A charity that supports the recovery of wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans through golf, the OCF was the brainchild of John Simpson. The former manager of the likes of Bernhard Langer, Vijay Singh and Sir Nick Faldo, Simpson lost part of his left leg to polio when he was a boy and so could empathise with the struggles faced by the individuals he met during a visit to Headley Court in the summer of 2009.

Inspired by them and determined to help make a difference, he held a pilot golf skills session in September 2009. On

July 2, 2010, the OCF was officially launched.

It organises regular events for its members across the UK and it was one such event at Kingsfield Golf Centre where David was introduced to its work.

"Straight away I knew it was something I could really get in to," he says. "I hadn't really played golf before then. I'd occasionally go to the range with a couple of mates, nothing serious, but after that first event, I went back to Kingsfield and got myself custom fitted for a set of clubs."

Golf isn't just his new passion; it's now also his job.

"I was asked by the OCF if I would consider working in the golf industry and I said I would," he reveals. "I was happy to do anything so long as it was outside." He had a trial as a greenkeeper at Kingsfield last year and 'never left'.

"I work three days a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It's brilliant. It's something I'd never expected to be doing when I left the army."

It's not without his challenges. David admits that his disability can sometimes hamper him. "It's hard work sometimes, especially with the injury. It's tiring. I use



■ Memorial gravestones in Srebrenica demonstrate the scale of the 1995 massacre



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VITAL STATS THE MILITARY IN NUMBERS

16

The minimum recruitment age for the British armed forces. Personnel may not, however, serve on armed operations until they reach 18.

22

The normal term of engagement for a member of the British armed forces. The minimum service required by enrolees is four years.

11,880

The estimated yearly intake into the British armed forces (per the 12 months to March 31, 2014).

187k

The approximate number of service personnel across the British Armed Forces.

7,145

The total number of British military fatalities since World War II. This includes 454 in 'Operation Enduring Freedom', which set to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and Iraq.

396

The number of British service personnel diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in 2013 - up by 20% on 2012.



■ Alex was medically discharged from the military after badly injuring his ankle in Iraq in 2009

► more energy than anybody else but you just have to batter on.

"Sometimes my good leg gets really sore, so I have to take painkillers, but I do as much as I can. There's nothing they've asked to me to do that I say I've said no to. I think that's the old army mentality. You know, 'Yeah, I'll do it'. I don't think that attitude ever leaves you. You just crack on.

"I do the bunkers, keep the place tidy and they've even adapted a couple of vehicles for me so that I can drive them. I've also started cutting the practice greens on the ride-on mower. They've shown me how to do that and it's brilliant. I just love it and I love it at Kingsfield, too.

Content with the new career he has made for himself in the security industry, Alex says that he isn't looking for employment through the OCF, just some diversion.

"These events are where I come to recuperate, to relax and to enjoy myself," he says. "When you leave the military, you lose something but the On Course Foundation helps you get it back. You get to spend time and play a great sport with like-minded people. It's like getting back the second family you thought you'd lost when you left the forces."

Getting into golf has been good for Alex in other ways, too. "It's great for your confidence," he says. "Plus, I'm much



■ Alex was a member of the parachute regiment from 2003 until 2009

'GOLF IS MY R&R. THE OCF EVENTS ARE WHERE I COME TO RECUPERATE, RELAX AND ENJOY MYSELF FOR A WHILE.'

You get treated like family and I that's something I really appreciate."



FOR ALEX, golf has become his 'R&R'. He found about the OCF's work through another charity and decided to attend one of its events.

He had played some golf when he was in his early teens but none since he joined the army. That event, though, was all it took to rekindle his love of the game.

"I joined a club, Frodsham, right after it and now I'm totally hooked," he says. "I've managed to get down to 16 but I'm improving all the time. I don't play a lot of competitive golf because I'm still relatively new to it but I'm consistently playing to handicap which is really satisfying."

further on in the recovery process than some of the other guys who are maybe just coming to the OCF for the first time, so I get a buzz out of being able to pass that confidence on to them. You can show them that it's all going to work out, that if I can get to this point, you can too. I find it quite rewarding. Again, it's that whole army mentality of taking strength from one another. You're stronger together than you are apart. That kind of thing. So, I guess I get two things out of it: personal enjoyment and the satisfaction of being able to help other people."



GES ALMOND awakens in Kings Cross Hospital. Sitting opposite him in the ward is his old skiing boss, wearing a suit. His brother is pushing his mother into the ►



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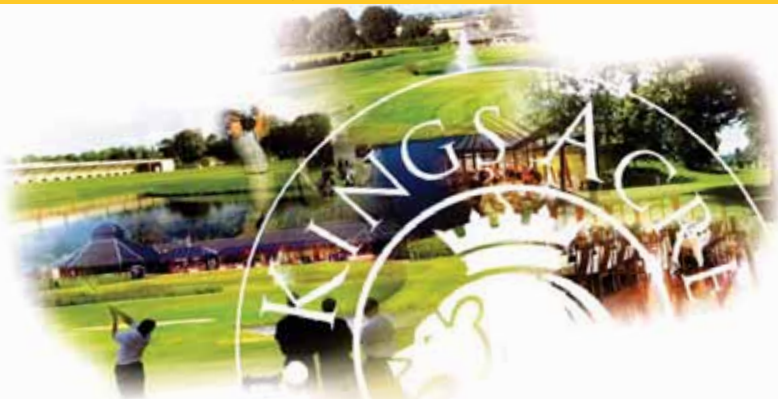
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ON LOCH LOMOND



■ Ges, David and Alex at an On Course Foundation event at Kingsfield Golf Centre

► room in a wheelchair with his nieces and one of his ex-girlfriends is also there. They're all looking at him. Except they're not. Ges is hallucinating.

It's the immediate aftermath of his breakdown at Kings Cross railway station. Confused, he lashes out at the medical staff as they prepare him for a routine electrocardiogram. "I thought they were trying to electrocute me," he says.

He is subsequently transferred, first to what he calls the 'crazies wing' in the Edith Cavell Hospital in Peterborough and then to Catterick in his native Yorkshire where his recovery goes well. Eighteen months after his breakdown, he, like David, Alex and thousands before him, is medically discharged from the army.

During his recovery, he finds out about the On Course Foundation. "I liked the sound of it from the off," he says. "Aside

from the opportunity to play golf, I really liked the structure of it. More than anything else I've seen, they've made it a family. I've been involved with it for about two years now and it's just magic."

Similar to many others, Ges had never played golf before becoming a member of the OCF but he says that the sport has helped him psychologically. "There's a feel-good factor that comes with playing golf that I really enjoy," he says. "I'm feeling better and it's not just that I'm getting my life back - I'm getting a new life, a new interest, new friends, a new family. It's wonderful."



THE ON COURSE FOUNDATION now has almost 500 members and is growing all the time.

Alex Woolston, its operations manager,

is a former military man himself. He left the army in 2013 after almost a decade as an officer in the Royal Artillery and has been with the OCF almost ever since.

"There's no better sport for recovery than golf," he says. "It's all inclusive and it doesn't matter how you play or what conditions you might have. There's a place for everyone on the golf course."

The OCF is funded mainly by donations from the golf community - captains' days, charity tournaments and the like - as well as individual giving, corporate support, grants and trusts.

"We also recently launched our 'Champion The Cause' appeal," explains Alex. It is a £2 per month direct debit donation scheme that anyone can sign up to in order to help the OCF continue to support its members, people like David, Ges and Alex.

"When you leave the army, you lose so much," concludes Ges. "The OCF helps to give you some of that back. It's a fabulous cause and I'm so grateful it exists."

For more information on the On Course Foundation, log-on to oncoursefoundation.com, email info@oncoursefoundation.com or call 020 8334 2010.

**'GES LASHED OUT AT MEDICAL STAFF.
'I GENUINELY THOUGHT THEY WERE
TRYING TO ELECTROCUTE ME,' HE SAYS.'**

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**DMD
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Playing the distance game

Six *bunkered* readers were invited to try out the latest Distance Measuring Devices from the top brands

WORDS CRAIG DENNETT PHOTOS LIAM REID

In 2011, Golf Datatech, one of the industry's leading market research companies, found that 64% of 1,500 golfers it surveyed had purchased a stand-alone Distance Measuring Device. The same study carried out two years later found that number had increased to 74%.

The most interesting statistic to emerge from the study, however, was that 90% of device users felt using a Distance Measuring Device helped them play better golf.

From laser rangefinders to watches and handheld devices, the Distance

Measuring Device market is one that is continuing to expand as more and more golfers seek help to improve.

It is a market with momentum on its side and the top manufacturers are continuing to bring in new technologies

to help golfers when out on the course.

With that in mind, we invited six *bunkered* readers to Mearns Castle Golf Academy near Glasgow, where they each got to try out two different DMDs.

The readers played two rounds of golf on the nine-hole course at Mearns Castle, using a different device on each nine, before letting us know their thoughts.

You can get the full lowdown on each of the devices used and discover what each of our readers thought of them by turning over and reading on. >





Name Gary Brown
Age 42
Handicap 5
Club Prestwick St Cuthbert

■ I had used an earlier edition of Bushnell's laser rangefinder before, so it was good to get the more advanced, newer version Tour X to try out. I liked the additional features it had compared to the old model. The information it gives about the gradient change was interesting because it allowed me to see how much of a difference a change in elevation made to the distance I needed to hit the ball. Being able to focus in on the target was great and the different colour options for displaying the yardage were good, too. The device has a Jolt system that makes sure you've got the right target, while the pin-seeker gives the device a small jolt once it has picked out the target and even pops up with a small flag so you definitely know it's the right yardage to aim for. It's easy to see why the pros like it so much when the yardage it gives is so accurate.



Name Ross Hardie
Age 33
Handicap 14
Club Forfar Golf Club

■ The Tour X was really good, even though I thought I'd prefer having a device with mapping on it. At the start, you miss the mapping because, with a laser, you're very much relying on still being able to read a course, but you quickly get used to it. It was perfect for measuring yardages and despite a few early troubles with the steadiness of my hand, I was able to get yardages I had confidence in. Overall, the product is great. The functions were really easy to use. The yardages were tying into roughly what the other GPS devices were telling us out there on the course. It was really good that way. I knocked the focusing dial off a bit, but it was really easy to adjust once I figured out where it was. I would say this is probably a device for the better player because it gives you pinpoint accuracy for the flag and, in the right person's hands, it will be absolutely dynamite.

Bushnell Tour X

Packed full of features, the Tour X is the first to boast Exchange Technology

The Tour X is the latest rangefinder from Bushnell, the No.1 laser rangefinder on the PGA Tour. Indeed, the brand's laser rangefinders were used by 93% of the field at this year's Open Championship during practice days.

The Tour X comes with two interchangeable faceplates that make it legal for use in all formats.

Named Exchange Technology, it conforms to the rules when the black faceplate is used, but not with the red faceplate, which uses Slope Technology to give adjusted distance readings that are based on elevation changes.

JOLT Technology also features with its short, vibrating bursts assisting the PinSeeker Technology to isolate the target and ensure you get the exact distance

you require to the flag or to a hazard.

Second generation E.S.P. technology has been installed, too, with Bushnell saying it gives yardages five times faster and more accurately than its previous top of the range model.

Bushnell also states the distance displayed on the device is accurate to within one-tenth of a yard.

bushnellgolf.eu



Easy to use

■ With one touch of the power button, you'll receive the desired yardage within half a second.

LASERS

£269.99



Nikon Coolshot 40

Waste no time in getting the right yardage with this latest Nikon model

Released earlier this year, the Coolshot 40 from Nikon is said to be lighter than any device it has produced before.

Able to measure a target up to 650 yards away, the Coolshot 40 is designed purely to measure actual distance and can be used in competition if local rules permit the use of a laser rangefinder.

The device features First Target Priority mode, which allows it to measure the distance to the closest subject, making it perfect for a flag that is sitting in front of a tree or another object.

What's more, all it takes is a single press of the 'power' button to give eight seconds of continuous measurement, meaning you can get the right distance with even the slightest hand movement.

On top of that, the Coolshot 40 debuts Nikon's Hyper Read functionality, meaning your measured distance is displayed in half a second, regardless of how far you are from the target.

Nikon's angle compensation technology displays the slope-adjusted distance for any shot, making it ideal for any courses that involve elevation changes. nikon.com



Name Aaron Hume
Age 33
Handicap 12
Club Tillicoultry Golf Club

■ I like using a DMD out on the course and I've always had a preference for ones that give you a map as I found that helped me when I was going to other courses. The Coolshot 40, however, was a great device. To start with, it was a bit shaky while I was getting used to getting my eye looking through the finder but once I started using my bag as a third point of contact to stabilise it, I got the hang of it and was able to get really quick and accurate yardages as the round went on. I was really surprised at how light it was. The little cover that comes with it was handy, too, and allowed it to sit nicely on my bag and gave easy access to the laser at all times. I could also just lift it up and immediately get a good yardage instead of swiping through various screens like I had to on the device I used before. I'm looking forward to continuing to use it.



Name Peter Rudzinski
Age 64
Handicap 14
Club Dumbarton Golf Club

■ I'd never used a laser rangefinder before but it was really good for distances once I got the hang of it. My hands were wavering around a bit at the start when I was trying to get the yardage but when I pressed the button I could see the yardages moving, so even though I didn't have it exactly right all the time, I knew roughly where it was. It was definitely a help for me to stand with my elbow anchored against something, which was hard to do on the course. It was very good with the yardages, though. I suppose the better the player you are, the easier it is to hit an exact distance. Normally I would just hit to the middle of the green. The ergonomics of it were great and it was really lightweight, too, which was surprising. The storage cover sat nicely on my bag and I could easily pick it up and get going straight away with confidence in the distance I needed to hit my shot.



Name Alan Gilchrist
Age 44
Handicap 7
Club Langlands Golf Club

■ I have used GPS devices before from a few different brands but this was the first time I'd tried the TomTom one. I like the watch design and I really liked this model because of that. It was comfortable to wear, it didn't move about when I was playing with it and swinging. I actually forgot it was on my wrist when I was playing and it has quite a cool and stylish design. It has more features than any of the devices I've used before. It's got the time, it's got the calorie counter, which I probably wouldn't use that much. It's also got more yardages and tells you where the hazards are on each hole. It was very accurate through the round. I compared it with the yardages the guys were getting with their devices, and I have a reasonable idea of how far I hit the ball with each club, and every time I used it to pick a club it was spot on for me.



Name Aaron Hume

■ For my handicap of 12, the TomTom Golfer gave me back, middle and front, which is a wider range to aim for than I got with the laser. It was very good that way. It allowed me to count the number of calories I'd burned, as well as the time taken for my round. It also has the WiFi link that allows you to update the courses easily, so it was definitely feature packed. To be honest, it was pretty easy to use throughout because it moved from hole to hole as I did, so I didn't have to chase it along and there was no confusion about whether I was going towards the right green. After a couple of holes, I got the hang of the menus to find my way about the functions and the general speed of it was great as well. I was jumping about the different options as we were playing to try to use them all, and I found it really easy to navigate once I had a good idea of where they all were. It was also really easy to trust the yardages it was giving me to the front, middle and back of the green.

TomTom Golfer

Know every inch of the course you're playing with this highly-detailed watch

Brand new from GPS specialists TomTom, the 'Golfer' watch is full of features designed to help you select the right club for the shot you're facing.

Pre-loaded with mapping data from 34,000 international courses, no matter where you play your golf, TomTom will be able to give you measurements. The 'Greenview' feature provides

you with a unique view of the green as well as showing the hazards that surround the putting surface. If you're after the hazards on the fairway, it can give you distances to those, too.

Yardages to the front, middle and back of the green allow you to dial in those approaches, while the 'Round Tracking' feature lets you keep track of your score, the total distance you've walked and

the amount of time your round has taken.

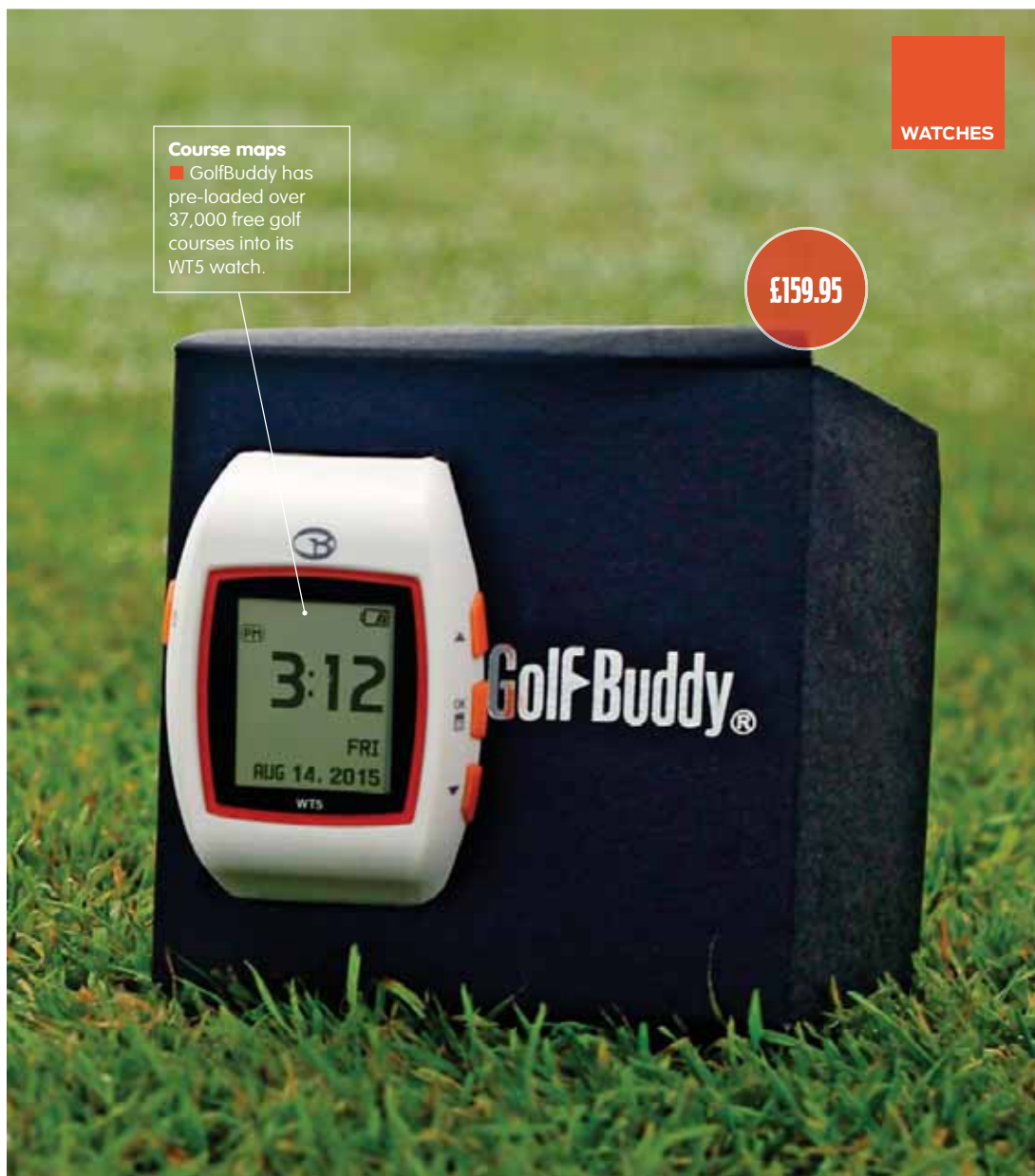
The extra-large display means that seeing distances is more straightforward than ever, while the One-Button control means it is easier to navigate through the menus than it is with other devices.

You can also receive daily course updates wirelessly through your smartphone using its Bluetooth capabilities. tomtom.com



Green distances

■ Precise yardages are given to the front, middle and back of the green, as well as hazards.



GolfBuddy WT5

Latest design features a host of improvements on its predecessor

The latest development in GolfBuddy's GPS watch offering, the WT5 is a significant improvement on its WT3 predecessor.

Slimmer, lighter and more comfortable to wear, GolfBuddy has ensured the strap has been re-styled to be softer on your wrist. The three buttons you'll be using to navigate your way around

the device's wide range of functions have all been moved to the same side, making it even easier to use.

Pin Placement Technology lets you put the flag on any one of nine preset locations on the green for more accuracy and over 37,000 free golf courses are pre-loaded onto the device.

With no annual fees to pay, Dynamic Green View gives distances directly from your

angle of approach as well as distances to hazards and targets at no extra cost.

What's more, the watch also measures the total distance you've walked and works well as a smart watch away from the course, too.

The GPS tracking can be used for walking, while it is also waterproof, making it handy for when you get caught in a rain shower.

gpsgolfbuddy.eu

WATCHES



Name Aiden Moore
Age: 18
Handicap: 9
Club: Renfrew Golf Club

■ I'd only ever used a GPS watch before but this one was a lot more accurate than the one I'd been using previously. It gives you different ranges than my old one did and it was better because it told you the hazards that are up and coming on the hole and distances to those as well. It is a big improvement on what I'd used before. I'd definitely say knowing the exact distance to hazards was a stand out for me. While knowing the distance to the green is great, you're not going to reach it every time, especially on a par-5, so knowing how far it is to a bunker or a burn is ideal. It was much more detailed than GPS watches I've used in the past, too. I've never used anything that was easier to set up. It was really easy. I was brilliant that it automatically selected the course for you as soon as you stepped onto the first tee.



Name Gary Brown

■ The GolfBuddy watch was good. It had a nice, straightforward face on it and there wasn't too much going on, which was good. The numbers were very clear on the watch itself, it was easy to understand and gave me all the distances that I needed, whether that was to the middle of the green or how far it was to carry a bunker. I really liked the extra detail that it gave over a laser. I think if you didn't know the course, and didn't know where the hazards were, the watch is ideal because it gives you those distances at the touch of a button. It was really easy to use. I found there were a couple of other bits on the watch regarding how far I'd walked, a clock and a timer, which were all nice little additions to what you'd expect from your device. Knowing it has the automatic, built-in course recognition technology as well makes it really straightforward to use and absolutely perfect for when you're out on the course.



Name Ross Hardie

■ This is my first year back after 16 years of not playing golf. The majority of the money I had saved went on the new clubs I bought and, to be honest, I didn't quite believe the hype surrounding GPS devices because of errors I'd seen before and also because, financially, I thought it was easier to get a strokesaver if I hadn't been to a particular course before. I guess I'm a bit old school. After using it, I'm quite into the map feature because my eyesight is terrible. I struggle to follow a golf ball and trying to follow where the hole is from a distance, so the map feature and the ability to zoom in to actually see all that's up ahead was really great.



Name Aiden Moore

■ Overall, I found the Approach G8 was really good. It pretty much brings everything that the other devices offer into one with the yardages and the maps, as well as the other functions that it gives. Probably the most effective part of it was that you can put in the yardages that you normally hit with your own clubs and it will then suggest the club to use for the yardage you have left. I know that feature can't be used in competition but it's great when you're getting to know a course or haven't played it before. It was a really simple, easy device to use, but can be time consuming at points when you're trying to pinpoint a certain part on the map or zoom in and zoom out to see a particular section of the hole. In terms of the yardages it gave me, they were really accurate and I quickly knew that I could trust the number on the screen and know that I was picking the right club to play from the tee and on my approach into the green. It's a high quality DMD.

Garmin Approach G8

Plot your way round the course expertly using Garmin's top-class features

Part of Garmin's latest handheld device launch, the Approach G8 has a host of brand new features designed to help you dial in your game on the course.

The new measurement feature called PlaysLike Distance helps to show an adjusted range for uphill and downhill shots, ensuring you're never caught out on the course.

The Club Advice feature also remembers how far you hit each club in your bag and makes recommendations based on distances you have left to the green.

It also has the same Smart Notification tech used in the Approach S4 watch that allows you to stay on top of your emails, texts and alerts through the device.

The Approach G8 is a premium satellite navigation

device and comes with a sleek, colour touchscreen. It is also fully loaded with over 30,000 courses from around the world.

It has an easy-to-read, three-inch, multi-touch display and also features Garmin's unique PinPointer, meaning you'll always know where the centre of the green is, even if you can't see it from where you're standing.

garmin.com



PlaysLike Distance

■ This shows an adjusted range for uphill and downhill shots giving you a more accurate yardage into the green.

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TOUCH

PRELOADED MAPS

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PHICS

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etooth

SE COMES CLOSE™

Then Map

Conforms to USGA
and R&A Rules

Communicates with
SkyGolf 360™ app via
Bluetooth® technology

Auto selection
Automatic course and hole selection means you don't need to waste time ensuring it is on the right hole.

SkyCaddie Touch

SkyCaddie's mappers ensure its course maps are constantly up-to-date

SkyCaddie's Touch handheld GPS rangefinder is the brand's flagship device and it is easier than ever to update the courses on it.

Using built-in Bluetooth technology, it can link with the free SkyGolf 360 app on your smartphone to download the latest alterations to the 35,000 ready-to-play, error-corrected golf course maps.

The Bluetooth capabilities can also be used to sync your device to the online SkyGolf 360 Member Community to see instant stats and graphs of the round you've just completed.

The Touch also features new HD graphics to ensure you have all the information you need to successfully plot your way. On top of that, the maps feature several hundred TrueGround Targets

per course, all of which have been created by SkyCaddie's professional mapping team to help golfers of all levels improve their course management.

To ensure the interactive maps are always accessible, the screen is 'glove friendly', meaning you can navigate using the high-resolution, sunlight-readable, full colour three-inch LCD display. skycaddie.co.uk



Name Peter Rudzinski

■ I've used a GPS device before but I found the Touch to be much better than what I'd been using previously. The one I had is a bit old now and could only hold five courses at any one time. This one was great and had thousands of courses already loaded on. The map on the screen is excellent and you can use it to find lay-up distances and distances to hazards. It's nice to be able to see what's ahead of you, especially when there's doglegs. It's easy to use and you can count your score on it as well. Being able to see where the bunkers were in front of the green was great, too. The one I'd been using before told you the distances to the hazard, but you had no perception of the distance between that and the green. On a couple of occasions, from where I was standing, I was looking at a bunker thinking it was right in front of the green but when I looked at the map I could see there was 20 yards in between the edge and the front of the green.



Name Alan Gilchrist

■ The Touch was excellent, really easy to use. It was very quick to respond, easy to navigate in between holes and it gave you a very clear picture of each hole when it came to hazards and distances. It was very detailed and very easy to understand. I found myself looking at the watch just by habit but the handheld device is easier to understand because you're not trying to navigate between different screens. It's all there in front of you and then you've got all the information in one fell swoop so, from that respect, it was easier. It is a lot better than the older model I'd used. It has a lot more features and the full colour maps made it really easy to pick out the various hazards, bunkers and paths. You can focus in on a certain part of the hole by touching the screen, which is really helpful the closer you get to the green. There was a lot of distance information on it, too. I'm used to front, middle and back of the green, but it was giving you distances to five or six different distances on a hole.

HOME AFFAIRS

Q&A Inside Scotland's 2019 Solheim Cup bid

As Scotland bids to bring more matchplay to Gleneagles, we answer the questions you may be asking

Why bid for the match?

Firstly, why not? Secondly, Scotland has demonstrated that it puts on a great show numerous times in the last few years, from the enormously successful 2014 Ryder Cup, to the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, to the MTV Europe Music Awards and so on. We do big events especially well. Thirdly, golf is our national sport and it is important that we continue to attempt to attract high-profile competitions to maintain our status and stature within the game.

Who is fronting the bid?

The Events Directorate of VisitScotland has compiled the proposal with support from the Scottish Government. This is largely the same team that helped to deliver last year's Ryder Cup.

Why go back to Gleneagles?

Simple: the overwhelming success of the Ryder Cup. The Perthshire resort's pedigree and credentials have never been in question - it's not five-star for nothing - but what it now has after last year's match is experience. It knows how to present a golf course fit for the best players in the game and, more to the point, how to cater to the needs of almost a quarter of a million spectators, around 1,000 media and many more people besides. It's been

there, done that and got the T-shirt and so is an obvious choice.

How many other Scottish golf facilities wanted the match?

We are told that around a dozen submitted notifications of interest, including some Open Championship host venues. That list was then narrowed down to a shortlist of four, from which Gleneagles was subsequently chosen.

Where is Scotland's main competition likely to come from?

It's a straight head-to-head between us and Sweden. Norway had been heavily fancied to make a strong case to stage the match but withdrew in mid August on account of a lack of funding and public support. A rumoured Spanish bid also never materialised, whilst a bid from England to stage the event was rejected almost immediately by the Ladies European Tour. Ganton in North Yorkshire had been keen to play host but the submitted bid didn't meet with the approval of the LET decision-makers, leaving Scotland and Sweden in the frame.

What is the Swedish bid like?

Strong, by all accounts. They intend to take the match to Bro Hof Slott, a 36-hole golf complex about an hour's drive from the capital,

Stockholm. It was originally built with the intention of staging a Ryder Cup but that has so far failed to happen. The Solheim Cup, it would seem, is the next best alternative. However, it is worth bearing in mind that Sweden has hosted the Solheim Cup on two of the last four occasions that it has been played on this side of the Atlantic...

If Scotland's bid is successful, when will the match take place?

That's TBC and dependent on a number of factors (the FedEx Cup, the Evian Masters etc) but it would certainly be in either August or September 2019.

Has Scotland hosted the match before?

Yes, twice. The first was in 1992 at Marriott Dalnabreigh; the second was in 2000 at Loch Lomond. On both those occasions, Europe ran out winners. In fact, those were the only two victories recorded by teams representing this side of the Atlantic in the first seven editions of the match, so you could say the home of golf is a good luck charm.

When will a decision be made?

We're expecting to hear at the end of October or beginning of November.

Anything else we should know?

No Scot has played in the Solheim Cup more often than Catriona Matthew, *left*. The former RICOH Women's British Open champion will be either 49 or 50 by the time the 2019 match rolls around. Who better, then, to captain Europe in Scotland?





CANNON NAMED FIRST SG CHAIR

■ Eleanor Cannon has been named as the first chair of Scottish Golf Limited. Succeeding the current chairs of both governing bodies, Tom Craig (SGU) and Beth Paterson (SLGA), Eleanor, 50, will seek to lead the ongoing development of golf in Scotland and meet the challenges the sport faces. "I'm enormously proud to have been appointed as the new chair of Scottish Golf Limited and look forward to this exciting opportunity," said Cannon. "I'm determined to help meet the many challenges the game faces in Scotland, including providing greater support to our clubs and players and projecting golf as a modern, inclusive sport with a positive image to attract more players." Cannon takes over as the Scottish Golf Union and Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association prepare to complete their long-awaited merger into Scottish Golf Limited on October 1.



MALCOLM EXCITED BY NEW PGA ROLE

■ Shona Malcolm says she is 'delighted' to be back working in golf after becoming the secretary of the PGA in Scotland - the first female to take such a role in any of the PGA's seven regions since it was founded in 1901. Malcolm has worked as both chairman of the Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association and CEO of the Ladies' Golf Union in a rich career in golf that began nearly 20 years ago in 1996. She takes over from Brian Mair, who left the role earlier this year to become the new commercial manager for the Scottish Golf Union. "I want to raise the profile of Scottish golf at all levels," said Malcolm. Liam Greasley, the PGA's director of regions, added: "Shona's experience and passion for the game means that she is extremely well equipped to promote the best interests of the PGA in Scotland, its members and to realise the Scottish region's potential."

IMAGES LIAM REID

Since it was opened in 2002, Mearns Castle Golf Academy has gone from strength to strength in its aim of becoming the west of Scotland's leading practice and play golf facility. In recent years, it has continued to expand the facilities it has to offer for golfers of all ages and abilities and is becoming a golf academy that possesses everything the modern day golfer is looking for.

Boasting a fully automated 40-bay driving range, an exceptional nine-hole golf course, a USGA specification short game area, PGA Coaching Academy and a Huxley Outdoor Putting Green, it is a place for golfers to develop and hone their skills all year round.

Former European Tour winner Alastair Forsyth has recently joined its team as a teaching professional and the teaching bays have recently been refurbished and now feature Trackman launch monitors and high resolution cameras to give the PGA professionals additional information about your swing. The cameras also allow them to slow down your swing and pinpoint aspects for improvement, creating a better understanding of how you can develop your game.

The Kids @ the Castle junior development programme now boasts 160 aspiring golfers, all with a clear pathway from complete beginners to the SGU Academy.

The Mearns Castle Golf Club runs within the Academy and has attracted members at a very high rate. Having started from scratch seven years ago, it now has a thriving membership that has doubled over the past three years.

"We've got about the ideal number of members now," said Lewis Burnett, a Tartan Tour professional who also works at the academy. "When we launched the club, we created a club with a difference that was fun, friendly and affordable. Golfers can get unlimited golf for just £37 per month, which we all believe is great value for money."

The same can be said for the academy itself, too, with the range consistently packed full of golfers all year round, while the USGA spec short game area allows players to keep their wedge game sharp. Memberships for the short game area are sold separately and you can use it as much as you like for £60 for six months, or £100 for the full year.

An academy with a difference

Mearns Castle Golf Academy is continuing to develop as a top-class golf facility with several new improvements in 2015



■ The teaching bays at Mearns Castle now feature Trackman



■ The range is regularly filled with golfers practising





■ The cafe is a great place for a bite to eat



■ Alastair Forsyth recently joined the academy's tuition staff

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■ INSIDE THIS ISSUE

● Mizuno unveils new iron families

Introducing the exciting new MP-5 and MP-25 ranges..... 82

● adidas ClimaHeat jacket

Get the Jason Day look in time for winter 85

● Srixon launches new AD333

The UK and Ireland's best-selling two-piece ball is back..... 86

● New Titleist ranges revealed

716 irons and 816 hybrids hit the shelves..... 90

● Ping adds i and GMAX

New irons are set to replace i25 and Karsten lines..... 94

● The return of the Great Big Bertha

Callaway's game-changer gets a 21st century makeover 96

● It's time to play...

Never miss a tee time with a stunning ETIQUIS watch..... 98

● Waterproofs showcase

Stay dry with 29 of golf's best new wet weather jackets 100

NEW GEAR



Mizuno unveils 'tech infused' iron ranges

Stunning MP-5 and MP-25 ranges headline leading Japanese brand's new gear line-up for 2016

Mizuno has been at the forefront of the irons market for many years and has a reputation for producing irons that the better player wants.

It has long been held in the highest regard by the golfing world for producing feel and workability of the highest

quality, as well as the control that more accomplished players look for.

As a result, it is renowned for being the industry's premier manufacturer of compact irons and it is building on that reputation with the launch of two new sets, MP-5 and MP-25, that it believes are the best

performing clubs it has ever made. The MP-5 features a new 'channel back' design, whilst the MP-25 is the first in the MP-line to have boron added into the metal mix.

To get a feel for a brand, all you have to do is look at the players it has on its tour staff, with Luke Donald, Chris Wood and Charles Howell III

all known for their impressive and precise iron play and all playing Mizuno's designs.

This issue is packed full of their latest gear for 2016, and in the opening pages we give you the full lowdown on what to expect from the two new irons as well as the brand new S5 wedges, with a touch of blue in the finish. >

IRONS

Mizuno MP-5 and MP-25

Infused with the very latest tech, these new irons from the top Japanese brand pack plenty of punch

Already loved by both Luke Donald (MP-25) and Chris Wood (MP-5) on the European Tour, these latest Mizuno irons are set to make a big impact in a market that is largely dominated by oversized designs.

The MP-5 is neither a blade nor a cavity-back design and features Mizuno's revolutionary 'channel back' that it says creates 'a forged iron like no other'.

Built using extensive testing among the brand's tour staff, these irons arrive with a focus on workability and feel, and act as an impressive replacement for the MP-64 irons launched back in 2013.

They have been positioned neatly between the classic MP blades and smaller players' cavity backs, with the 'channel back' placing more of the weight behind the central impact point to give the blade-like feel better players look for, while mass has been relocated to ensure both stability and performance are consistent across the full face, even on off-centre strikes.

The head itself is larger than a traditional blade, with a slightly thicker top line, but that doesn't take anything away from the traditional Mizuno appearance.

The MP-25s, meanwhile, replace the

MP-54s and are the first of the brand's 'better player' irons to feature boron in the design. Introducing it to the 1025E Grain Flow Forged steel has helped create a thinner, stronger metal that helps these forged irons to perform better.

The material was first used in the company's JPX-850 Forged irons last year to much acclaim and is part of Mizuno's first 'true high ball-speed' iron designed for low-to-mid handicappers.

The 3-iron to 6-iron boast a Micro-Slot pocket cavity to give higher ball speeds, while still delivering the feel and touch that tour players look for.

golf.mizuno-europe.com

■ MP-5

£115
PER IRON

The 'channel back' sits behind the impact point on the face and ensures the feel is similar to that found in the classic MP blades.



MP-25

**£115
PER IRON**

Each iron has been forged from a single billet of 1025 boron steel, creating an impressive compact iron that gives more speed and distance.

**FIRST
HIT**



'I WAS SURPRISED HOW EASY IT WAS TO HIT THE MP-5'

BY CRAIG DENNETT

■ Mizuno's launches are like clockwork and it always adds that bit of extra excitement to Open week when we equipment junkies get an insight into what will become public in the weeks to follow.

The new MP-5s replace the MP-64s and, when you first pick them up, they're the epitome of a better player's blade. Not used to playing that style of head, I was wary as I addressed my first shot but it was so easy to hit. I was genuinely surprised.

Starting with the lower irons, the channel-back gave even better feel than I found in the MP-64s and, even when I moved into the longer irons, the feel, forgiveness, ball flight and sound were all great. An iron built for better players, it's also forgiving enough to work for the lower end of the mid-handicap scale.

The MP-25s, meanwhile, are fantastic from a distance point of view. The Boron can be felt at impact and gives more distance than the MP-5s. In terms of feel, it was similar to the JPX850 Forged, but allowed me to work the ball more. It is less forgiving than the JPX850 Forged but that is to be expected from this better player's model.



SENDING SOME TOUR LOVE

THE NEW IRONS PROVED IMMEDIATELY POPULAR WITH MIZUNO'S TOUR STAFF



Mizuno introduces S5

A little bit of 'blue magic' has been installed into the latest wedge offerings with the new Blue IP finish

Without doubt the headline maker in the new S5 wedges from Mizuno is the addition of the Blue IP finish into the line, maintaining the blue theme in its offerings that was kickstarted by the blue crown on the JPX850 driver released last year.

Fitting in alongside the MP-T5 wedge, the S5 is not the cast wedge we're used to seeing join the forged MP design in Mizuno's wedge offering. Instead, it has been Grain Flow Forged from 1025E Pure Select Mild carbon steel.

The brand says the S5 offers 'unprecedented levels of greenside performance', giving the perfect blend of feel, control and workability. Luke Donald surprised the guys at Mizuno by putting them straight into his bag at the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth earlier this year, with the designs made to meet the needs of everyone from the tour pro to the mid-handicapper.

While creating the S5, Mizuno says it remained wary of the different demands players face in both the full-wedge and greenside shots, and that's why these

latest models give high spin throughout the wide range of lofts that have been made available.

"These S5 wedges are more of a midsize profile, so there's a lot more clubface for fuller shots," says Chris Voshall, Mizuno club engineer. "They're less intimidating when you're faced with 95 yards from a less-than-perfect lie. They went straight into Luke's bag in May, which suggests we did a pretty good job with the sole grinds and versatility around the greens."

golf.mizuno-europe.com

The S5 wedges have Quad Cut Grooves CNC-milled into the face after forging, ensuring you can get the most out of your short game shots.



'S5 IS A WEDGE THAT LEAVES A LASTING IMPRESSION'

BY CRAIG DENNETT

FIRST
HIT

■ The first thing that stands out about the S5 wedges is the Blue IP finish. There's no denying that, but for the sceptics out there, it's something you get used to very quickly. For those that can't, there's also a more traditional White Satin finish.

The S5 sits in Mizuno's line-up alongside the MP-T5, and Luke Donald had a major influence on its creation.

When compared to the MP-T5, the S5 has a larger face, which will help nervy wedge players have a bit more confidence in their shots.

The contrast in finish means the face is framed nicely and it feels similar to the irons, so Mizuno has achieved its aim of keeping that aspect as consistent as possible throughout the bag.

In terms of control, the wedge was very good and, as long as you're making the right contact with the ball, you'll expect to get similar levels of spin to the other high quality wedges on the market.

It's already been heavily validated on tour, and is a wedge that leaves a lasting impression.



Get the look...



£90

JACKET

adidas ClimaHeat

Get the Jason Day look for the colder months ahead

Jason Day is hot property right now having just bagged his first major title at Whistling Straits. Following that superb US PGA win, the Aussie was quickly noted by Nick Faldo as being part of golf's new 'Big Three', the remainder of the trio being new world No.1 Jordan Spieth and Rory McIlroy.

Day is also well-known for being a sharp dresser, and now you can get your hands on the adidas Golf gear he wears on tour. Pictured is the

ClimaHeat concept fill jacket, as worn by Day, *above*, during his Open charge St Andrews in July, where temperatures often called for something breathable but warm. The jacket features bonded quilting on the front and back panels and elastic binding to give you exceptional freedom of movement.

It is available in three colour options: black/black, dark grey heather/bright blue and power red/dark grey heather.

adidasgolf.co.uk

"I still want to accomplish that No.1 goal of mine, which is to be the best player in the world. I'm still motivated and still very hungry for that, even after this win. Stuff like this is just the icing on top of the cake when you work so hard."

Jason Day, after winning the US PGA



STROMBERG WINTRA TROUSERS

■ Stromberg has updated its colour offering in its high quality Wintra trousers ahead of the arrival of the wet weather. Designed specifically for winter golf, the trousers feature a 3-Ply Winter technology that boasts three different layers to make the trousers perfect for the colder weather. The outer layer gives a stylish appearance with a water resistant finish, while the middle layer acts as a windproof, breathable and waterproof membrane preventing water getting through the fabric. The inside layer is thermal to keep you warm in the winter months. Now, for Autumn/Winter 2015, Stromberg has made its Wintra trousers available in four colours - black, navy, steel grey and glacier blue - with an RRP of £54.95.

stromberggolfonline.com



SKYPRO GETS FREE UPGRADE

■ SkyCaddie's award-winning SkyPro golf swing training device has been upgraded for 2015 with a new Attack Angle feature, which measures whether the clubhead is moving up or down on the ball at impact. The upgrade is automatically added when you update the free SkyPro app on your smartphone or tablet, with Attack Angle appearing as a new parameter in the Impact area of every swing. It will also be applied retrospectively to every swing you have ever recorded on your SkyPro. golfskypro.com

Srixon AD333: The Next Generation

New Spinskin cover headlines return of No.1 selling two-piece ball in UK and Ireland

As the saying goes, it's harder to stay on top than it is to get there but Srixon has continued to push the boundaries of innovation with its newest AD333 golf ball to ensure it maintains the title of No.1 selling two-piece ball in the UK and Ireland.

Srixon's AD333 has been

the UK's best-selling ball in the category for the last nine years and has played a significant role in helping Srixon grow its market share from 1% back in 2005 to 25%, as it is today.

The design has been updated for this year and, after installing several key improvements, the seventh generation is expected to

continue with that top-selling trend.

Srixon's Spinskin technology is the main improvement that has been made and it now offers more feel and more spin around the greens. The real differences with the updated technology can be best seen on shots between 40 and 60 yards in length.

What's more, there are 20 fewer dimples on the new version compared to the 2013 model, with the dimples more equally sized, too, to ensure a greater surface area is covered. This works to reduce the amount of drag and, in turn, increase distance on shots.

srixon.co.uk

Srixon's Spinskin cover, that currently features on its premium Z-Star and Z-Star XV balls, has been updated to improve greenside performance without sacrificing distance.

The new 324 dimple pattern means there are fewer dimples, but they are more equally sized and they cover a larger portion of the golf ball's surface area.

The Energetic Gradient Growth Core describes the varying stiffness of the Srixon core and has been improved further in the 2015 model.

£30
PER DOZ



AD333

■ **Srixon says** "The AD333 continues to re-define game improvement, giving the perfect combination of distance off the tee and spin control around the green. Coupled with superior soft feel and the visual performance of both Pure White and Tour Yellow, this is our most advanced two-piece golf ball to date."



AD333 TOUR

■ **Srixon says** "The amazing AD333 Tour gives the perfect combination of distance off the tee and spin control around the green. Coupled with superior soft feel and the visual performance of Srixon's Pure White technology, this is the tour ball for people who don't play on the tour."

THE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND THE AD333

■ Spinskin

Already used in Srixon's premium Z-Star and Z-Star XV golf balls, Spinskin is designed to improve greenside spin without sacrificing distance and tee-to-green control. The proprietary Spinskin coating is combined with a new cover to improve the friction between the golf ball and club surface by 20%, resulting in even better performance around

the green. The Spinskin allows for a fluid and soft-like pattern to form across the ball for ultimate friction. A traditional golf ball cover structure forms in a tight pattern and limits the amount of friction at contact and, in turn, reduces the greenside performance of the ball, causing less control on short shots. Traditional covers also create more drag during flight.



■ Energetic Gradient Growth Core

This is a patented Srixon technology that is utilised in the core of every ball the brand produces. Often shortened to E.G.G., it is the term used to describe the varying stiffness of the Srixon core, which helps to give added benefits over a uniform-stiffness core. This soft-to-firm stiffness configuration allows the golf ball to give both higher ball speed and low driver spin.

■ 324 Speed Dimple pattern

The new AD333 design features Speed Dimple technology, which combines uniformity of dimple design with higher surface coverage, creating more distance and wind resistance. The Aero Power Dimple design delivers a penetrating trajectory with higher lift force, resulting in impressive carry and overall distance, as well as superior stability.



Alan Reid

PGA pro at West Lothian GC

■ "The Srixon AD333 ball is a top seller at our club because it is the highest quality of ball in its class and priced at the right level for the majority of typical club golfers. From a technical perspective, it has great feel off the driver as well as around the greens. Many of our customers have commented, or given us feedback, that the AD333 gives them confidence in their game and has the advantage that it costs much less than similar balls in its category."



Stuart Morrison

PGA pro at Tain GC

■ "The AD333 is the best-selling ball I supply. The feedback from members and visitors alike is great. They like the feel and playability of the ball without compromising on distance. The ball is then very versatile to a range of playing abilities, making it a 'must stock' item in my shop. There is great anticipation of the new version of the ball, which can only be enhanced by its tremendous value against other more expensive balls."



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'We're really confident we'll remain the No.1 two-piece ball'



Ben Davis, brand and marketing manager of Srixon-Cleveland Golf, discusses the new AD333 launch with Craig Dennett

What did you set out to achieve with the new generation of AD333 balls?

We really wanted to create a ball that felt slightly softer off the face and around the greens than the previous model but without losing the key benefits of the ball that have made it such a success over the last nine years. I feel we've achieved that and we're excited about it going out into the market.

Did you face any difficulties incorporating any of the technologies?

I have to say we actually didn't. The second generation Spinskin was already used on our Z-Star and AD333 Tour balls, so it was just a matter of making it work with the rest of our technology in the ball design.

This is now the second generation to feature Spinskin. How has it helped to improve the performance of the AD333?

It has helped us improve the performance a lot ever since it was brought in from the Z-Star range. It has, without doubt, helped to generate even more spin around the greens and on pitch shots within 50 yards, plus it also helps the ball feel

even softer on the greens off the putter face.

It's also available in Tour Yellow. Do you still see a demand for yellow golf balls?

Yes, it is available, and we do still see a demand for it but mainly in the winter months. There are some people out there that like to play with them all year round.

What are the benefits players could see from playing Tour Yellow over Pure White?

There is no doubt it is easier to see the Tour Yellow in flight, and it can be easier to find in some places, too.

What type of golfer is Srixon aiming the new AD333 family at?

It really is aimed at a wide range of golfers but, in particular, those looking for a high performing golf ball in the two-piece market that encompasses good feel, more spin, durability and distance. It really is the ultimate 'all year round' golf ball and that is

shown by its number one two-piece position in the UK and Ireland for the last nine years in a row.

How confident are you that this ball will help you retain your title as the No.1 selling two-piece ball in the UK and Ireland?

We feel really confident that we will remain the No.1 two-piece ball as we have simply improved it in areas where it matters, without compromising the features that have kept it as the number one for so long. We have a good feeling about it.

Why do you think golfers like playing AD333 over another two-piece ball?

I think it has proven so popular because I think they trust it and feel the ball will perform in all areas of the game. Whether they are looking for distance off the tee, feel on shots into the greens, shots around the greens, durability or spin, it performs on them all and I think people know what they're going to get from it, too.



Chris Robinson
PGA pro at Portpatrick GC

■ "It is important to me, as a respected club professional, to be able to offer my customers the best range of balls possible. The best-selling AD333 has a number of accolades and awards, making it a really easy choice for me to stock in numbers. This confidence is borne out as I have received positive feedback about the ball from many golfers over many years. I am sure this will continue with the newly launched AD333 going forward into next year."



Graham Gormley
PGA pro at Carnwath GC

■ "Srixon certainly knows what it is doing when it comes to ball manufacturing. The new AD333 offers improvements that will help golfers of all abilities become more consistent, especially around the greens. The beauty of the AD333 is that the ball cover allows better control when hitting shots into the green, without compromising distance off the tee. This is an important factor for most club golfers who do not have the same swing speeds as tour players."

SRIXON AD333 IN NUMBERS

20

The percentage increase in friction created by the Spinskin cover from 30 yards and in.

1

The compression of E.G.G. Core is one point harder than it was in the 2013 AD333.

2007

The year AD333 first became the No.1 selling two-piece ball in the UK and Ireland.

324

The number of dimples on the seventh generation AD333 ball, 20 fewer than in 2013.

New Titleist gear...

Introducing the exciting 716 AP1, AP2, CB & MB lines

It can be difficult to improve on something that is already pretty damn good - but Titleist have done just that with their latest iron lines. The new 716 range comprises updated versions of the AP1, AP2, CB and MB lines, with a number of notable standouts. The AP1 boasts high density

tungsten in the heel - 50% more than the previous 714 - and lowers the CG to give you a higher launch. The addition of tungsten does not mean a bigger head but does, however, mean massive gains in MOI.

According to Titleist's own robot testing, the AP1 is the

longest iron in its category in terms of carry. The AP2 again has tungsten weighting in the heel and toe (25% more than 714) and gives you better distance on off-centre hits than the 714. As you move into the better player category, Tungsten also works its magic in the co-forged CB. Now, you

get more consistent speed across the face, better carry distance than the previous CB version and there's also a new 'pre-worn' edge, which helps with turf interaction. The MB is Titleist's muscle back blade option and boasts a sharper toe and thinner top line. titleist.co.uk



■ AP1

Steel, £93 per iron
Graphite, £107 per iron

■ AP2, CB & MB

Steel, £117 per iron
Graphite, £133 per iron

"IF WE CAN PROMOTE IMPROVED DISTANCE COUPLED WITH BETTER FEEL, THAT'S A HOME RUN FOR US."

DAN STONE, VICE PRESIDENT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT



'THE BUZZ FROM HITTING THE AP2 IS INSTANT'

BY BRYCE RITCHIE

■ The first thing I should point out is that I am not immediately drawn to thicker, chunkier irons such as the AP1 - but that obviously doesn't mean they don't work. If you're looking for easy turf interaction, obscene amounts of forgiveness and no loss of distance, then the AP1s are for you. They were ridiculously easy to hit. The AP2, for me perhaps the biggest success story in the new line-up, took me by surprise. I haven't hit a Titleist iron for a while and never thought I would lean

towards an AP2 as I have a penchant for smaller head sizes, but this iron is simply brilliant. It looks neat at address and felt extremely controllable through impact, something that has always turned me off to cavity backs, or 'bigger' heads. Previous AP2 owners will find this an easy switch, while new trialists won't need much convincing once they hit them. The buzz you get from hitting this iron is instant. It's a blast. As mentioned, I'm a small head iron snob and like a

clean, less chunky look at address. For me it was a toss of the coin between the CB and MB. The CB is co-forged and immediately feels soft and controllable at impact whilst the MB is everything you would expect from a forged blade. My fitter just about had a heart attack when I told him I preferred the blades, not knowing I grew up playing a set of Maxfli Australian Blades from the age of 13. The standout iron, though, is undoubtedly the AP2. All in, the 716 line is stunning.

FIRST
HIT

T-MB

■ What Titleist calls a utility iron, the T-MB has tungsten weights in the heel and toe and has the same blade length and profile as the AP2. Perfect for players who still like long irons but want to make them easier to hit.

£169
(S) PER IRON

£189
(G) PER IRON

£205

816 H1

■ The H1 is slightly bigger. It's best suited to a sweeper with a more shallow angle into the golf ball. It's a little more forgiving and more playable.

816 H2

■ The H2 is more of an 'iron' type of hybrid. It has a little more offset and fits the player who hits the ball with a more descending blow or attacks the ball like an iron. On tour, the usage is about 2:1 with H2 versus H1. A lot of tour players attack the turf more aggressively.

£205

816 H1, H2 and T-MB

You might be surprised that there's a new set of hybrids in the line considering the 915 hybrids were only released last year, but Titleist are keen to make sure golfers understand how gapping works and, of course, new irons mean that a new line of hybrids were required because the two, essentially, need to run together effectively.

"We ran considerable testing looking at our target players and what our opportunities were in terms of improving upon the previous generation and offering a more complete fitting to align with the irons," said Stephanie Bezilla, Titleist's director of metalwood development. "Our focus was on how hybrids can more successfully integrate with irons. We wanted to bring even better performance with these hybrids."

The H1 model, according to Bezilla, will suit the player who sweeps the ball and has a more shallow angle of attack. The H2 has a little more offset and fits the player who is a more aggressive striker of the ball, with a more descending blow.

The T-MB follows the profile of the AP2 and has tungsten in the heel and toe. We found this made the club feel incredible, even on off-centre hits, and threw up a lower ball flight compared to the H1 and H2.

Titleist advise you to speak to a fitter to get a professional opinion on your gapping. titleist.co.uk

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STEPHANIE BEZILLA

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SRIXON

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ON SALE

Titleist

**NXT Tour S
Golf Balls (Yellow)**

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ON SALE

adidas 

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MAX

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NEW 2015

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NEW 2015

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IRONS

Ping adds i and GMAX

Latest releases succeed i25 and Karsten in brand's line-up

Ping has a reputation for producing irons that provide forgiveness and playability to those looking for some help squaring the clubface dating back to the release of the Eye2 irons in 1982.

Since then, it has developed its iron offering to now include a true better player's style design, as well as a super game improvement set.

With that in mind, Ping has introduced its latest additions to the line-up, in the form of the i and GMAX irons, with more distance a key component to the make-up of both sets.

The i irons replace the i25s and are built for better players who have a preference for blade-like short irons but also want extra help in their longer irons.

Larger head sizes and a centre of gravity positioned low and further back in the long irons mean you can get more distance and more forgiveness, while the short irons and wedges are smaller, giving the combination of precision and control for shots into the green.

Both feel and perimeter weighting have also been improved compared to the i25, giving better feedback on shots, as well as improved forgiveness and accuracy.

The GMAX, on the other hand, is a set of irons for players who want as much distance and forgiveness as they can find. Replacing the Karsten family, it is considered to be an aggressive game improvement iron that can increase ball speeds by up to 3mph on its predecessor, giving more distance and control.

Ping has also installed its new COR-Eye structure in the cavity, which has allowed the clubface to be made 31% thinner than the Karsten model and creates faster ball speeds that are constant across the face.

ping.com

£115
PER IRON

A Custom Tuning Port has been concealed in the sole, with its lower position aligning with the impact area for more solid sound and feel.

Ping introduces Glide ES wedges

■ Inspired by the original Ping Eye2 sand wedge, the Glide ES is able to offer more versatility across all conditions thanks to its scooped sole.

The new model will line up alongside the other Ping Glide wedges and features a new tapered hosel, which is smaller leading into the face and helps to reduce drag through the sand, ultimately helping to give you better performance when you find yourself in a bunker.

The grooves optimise spin on chips and pitches, while the chrome-plated

431 stainless steel head repels moisture to create more friction for improved spin and consistency in wet conditions, as well as in the rough.

Unlike most clubs, the Glide wedges are engineered from the hands down to provide short game performance and trajectory control on shots of all lengths. The proprietary Dyla-wedge grip is three-quarters of an inch longer than a standard grip to encourage you to grip further down for controlling your ball flight on wedge shots into the green.

ping.com



£110



**£115
PER IRON**

**FIRST
HIT**



'HITS ACROSS THE CLUBFACE KEPT THEIR LINE WELL'

BY CRAIG DENNETT

■ The i25s were a big hit in the *bunkered* office when they landed almost exactly two years ago, and the latest i additions received a very similar reaction.

The first thing I noticed was the movement of the Custom Tuning Port as it had been more visible behind the face on the i25. It has been moved deeper into the sole of the club to ensure it sits immediately behind the point of impact for better sound and feel. The difference wasn't immediately noticeable.

What did become clear very quickly was the additional forgiveness on offer compared to the i25. Shots hit across the face kept their line well and the distances remained consistent.

The slightly larger and deeper head sat nicely at address and actually inspired more confidence standing over the ball.

It was difficult to notice the increase in head size as you go through the set but it does help give that extra bit of distance.

■ Ping GMAX

COR-Eye Technology allows the sole, face and top rail to 'activate' simultaneously, producing more face flex for more ball speed and distance.

£199



Two new putters in Cadence TR line-up

■ Ping rounded out its major summer releases with the addition of the Ketsch Mid and Craze-e-r models to its Cadence TR putter line.

The Ketsch Mid has a smaller, more compact head than the original Ketsch mallet that is currently in play on many of the pro tours. It boasts a 100% milled, aerospace-grade aluminium body to ensure precision, and also features True-Roll Technology grooves, which vary in width and depth from the centre of the face to produce consistent ball speeds for greater distance control.

Ping is also offering you the chance to choose between a traditional-weight model for those with faster tempos, or a heavy-weight model for players with slower tempo strokes.

Alongside the Ketsch Mid, the Craze-e-r (RRP £175) is a variation on the Craze-e, one of the most successful putter models Ping has ever produced. The Craze-e-r is a high-MOI putter that, like the Ketsch Mid, is also offered in both traditional and heavy-weight designs, with the difference coming from the insert.
ping.com

■ GREAT BIG BERTHA

Adjustable Perimeter Weighting in the driver adds stability, as well as more draw and fade options without sacrificing forgiveness.

£229

£369

METAL
WOODS

Great Big Bertha makes long-awaited.

Great Big Bertha and Alpha 816 DBD are newest additions to Callaway's renowned metals family

Following the success of the Big Bertha Alpha 815 models from last year, Callaway has revealed its two new driver designs for 2016: the Big Bertha Alpha 816 Double Black Diamond and the Great Big Bertha.

The latter is a name that the vast majority of golfers will recognise, with the original Great Big Bertha launched in 1998 to great acclaim. Callaway is expecting this one to rank every bit as high on the likeability scale as the original did back in the late 1990s.

It's safe to say the driver market and golf technology have both changed a lot in the interim years and the new Great Big Bertha takes attributes from a number of Callaway's most recent products, including the Bertha 815 and the V-Series, both launched last year.

Offering adjustability through an OptiFit hosel, it has been designed to give all of the performance benefits of the standard 815, but with even more forgiveness to maximise its appeal to a wider range of golfers.

The Adjustable Perimeter Weighting, which is a 10g sliding weight on the perimeter of the clubhead, creates more forgiveness and control, as you are able to slide it along the track to dial in your dispersion control, helping you to hit your drives on line.

More distance is achieved across the face through the introduction of the brand's next generation R-Moto technology, which has allowed Callaway to make the material consistently thinner across the clubface.

■ BIG BERTHA ALPHA 816

£249

Cup Face Technology in the fairway wood generates high ball speeds for better players on centre and off-centre hits.

£429

Meanwhile, the Alpha 815 Double Black Diamond is a player's club that Callaway says works for more than just the better golfer.

It features new Dual Distance Chambers that are 'perfect for giving extreme distance' when combined with the Gravity Core, which remains from last year. By placing the weight in the left or right chamber, you can choose between a neutral or draw bias, before flipping the Gravity Core

up or down, depending on where your normal impact location is on the face. This will help you get your desired ball flight with maximised ball speed for your impact location.

The deeper face, traditional head shape and lower centre of gravity produce the right amount of forgiveness and workability.

Callaway has also added Alpha 816 and Great Big Bertha fairway woods to the line-up. callawaygolf.com

✱ NEW GEAR



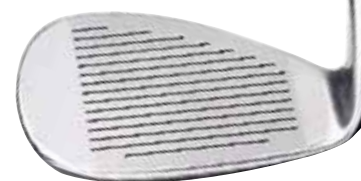
£59.99

HotBlade introduces Anti Shank wedge

■ The latest innovation from HotBlade is the new Anti Shank wedge, which has been designed to inspire confidence amongst golfers who struggle around the green.

Made from premium 431 stainless steel, the design takes the hosel away from view by removing weight and mass from that area of the head, minimising the possibility of a shank. These changes also help move the centre of gravity towards the toe, further reducing the possibility of hitting a hosel rocket.

Available in both 56° and 60° options, it uses CNC Milled grooves to offer maximum spin and control, giving greater precision to your shots. hotblade.co.uk



Galvin Green Bowen windstopper

■ Brand new from Swedish golf apparel brand Galvin Green, the Bowen windstopper is a windproof, short sleeve, half-zip jacket that is light, soft and flexible. Combining great breathability and comfort, it also allows for a wide range of movement.

Available in black/gunmetal/white, blue/white/electric red, and white/black/emerald green. galvingreen.com

£170

Time for style

ETIQUUS nails niche market with watch for golfers

If you're gassing for a new watch, you might want to check out the impressive line of timepieces from British brand ETIQUUS. They are the brainchild of entrepreneur Gary Butler and consist of 24 watches (17 for men and seven for women) each with their own nod of appreciation to the game of golf.

It took Butler five years to research and develop the product line and bring it to market and, with over 12 months of business behind him already, it is safe to say the future is bright for his company.

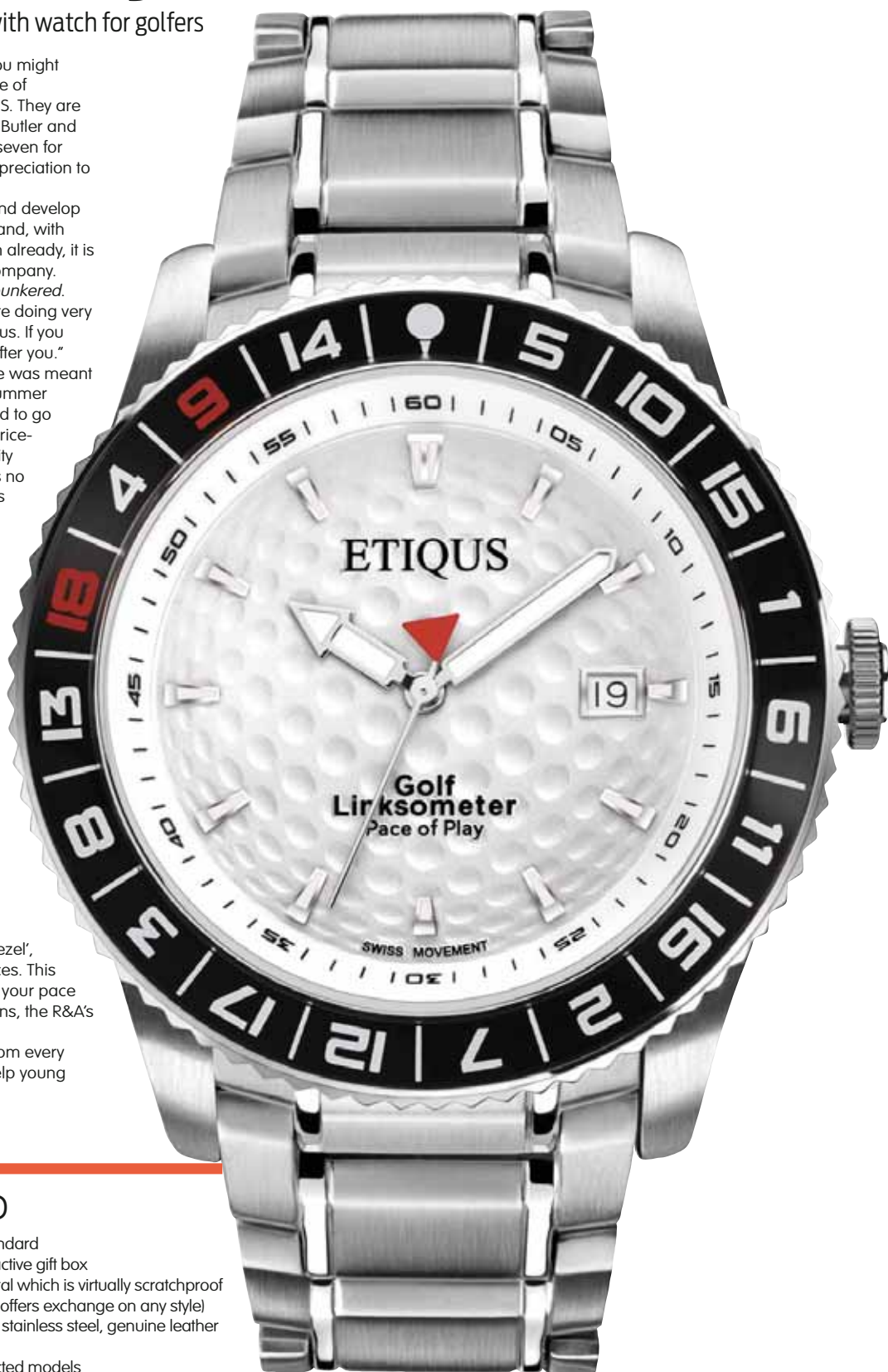
"We're just starting out," Butler tells *bunkered*. "Sales are ticking along nicely and we're doing very well. Customer service is everything to us. If you look after your customers, they'll look after you."

Butler is a self-confessed golf nut. He was meant to launch his new timepiece line last summer during the Open at Hoylake but decided to go and watch the golf instead. He's also price-conscious and wanted to make a quality watch at an affordable price, so there's no retail mark-up on the products. He sells direct to customers from his website - etiquus.co.uk - and dispatches all orders the following day. "I'm used to running companies. I know you need a good brand, you need a good product, you need good customer service and, most importantly, you need to think like a customer. When I launched ETIQUUS, I spent a lot of time thinking about the process the customer goes through from discovering the brand right the way through to putting on the watch. Existing customers will end up as your best sales people."

Prices start from £179 and peak at £329, with golfers able to choose from a variety of designs, each of which include a subtle nod to golf such as the unique dimples on the face that give the 3D effect of a golf ball.

One standout feature is the 'Butler Bezel', which is standard on selected timepieces. This patented design allows you to monitor your pace of play to a guideline of 3hrs and 50mins, the R&A's suggested timeframe for 18 holes.

On top of that, ETIQUUS donates £5 from every watch sold to the Golf Foundation to help young kids experience and enjoy the game. etiquus.co.uk



ADDITIONAL INFO

- Swiss made movements come as standard
- Each watch is delivered within an attractive gift box
- Glass face crafted from Sapphire Crystal which is virtually scratchproof
- Excellent gift option for golfers (ETIQUUS offers exchange on any style)
- Strap materials available include solid stainless steel, genuine leather and durable silicone rubber
- Patented Butler Bezel included in selected models

Each watch order is processed the following day and is presented in an attractive storage box, making it the perfect gift for golfers.



Gary Butler on the inspiration behind the ETIQUIS brand

■ I got a watch for my 18th, my 21st, my 30th and for my 40th. I got a watch patent for my 50th and a watch company for my 55th! I've always liked watches. They are great gifts. Thirteen years ago, on holiday in Quinta do Lago, I had a cheap watch and it broke. Because it was my birthday, we went to the Swatch shop in Vilamoura and my daughter picked a watch for me. That afternoon I was on my sun lounger and one of the lads from the hotel came up and said, 'Hey Gary, I didn't realise you were a diver?' I said, 'I'm not a diver.' He said, 'Well, you've got a diver's watch on.' He showed me how it worked as I hadn't a clue. Right then, my mind started wandering. I'd never seen a watch for golfers. I wouldn't call myself a watch nerd, but I *understand* watches. I always wanted to see what was the best quality watch I could do for the price of a premium driver. Drivers are probably the most popular equipment purchase. Rolex and Omega make fantastic watches and advertise in the golfing world - but there are probably less than 10% of golfers who could afford one. If you can afford to play golf, you can afford to buy one of my watches.

THE BUTLER BEZEL

■ Most sports watches have got a bezel. What I realised is that most of those bezels have mathematical formulas on them. When I joined the golf committee in 2008, I realised the R&A had introduced pace of play guidelines. I know that pace equals speed, speed is distance over time - I'm an engineer and have a degree in engineering and mathematics - so all I had to do was work out the mathematical algorithm you could put on the outside of the bezel that gives you a number sequence. It looks pretty random but, actually, if you set the little ball to the beginning of your tee off time, as the minute hand sweeps around the dial, you can see where you are in relation to your pace of play of 3hrs and 50mins, the time in the R&A's guidelines. It's not a timing device - it's a timepiece. You've got a random number sequence. It's like a secret code. If you understand what that is, you understand golf.



Classic Tour Collection From £179

■ Described as a "classic dress watch" and designed to add the "finishing touch", the Classic Tour Collection comprises eight models, with a choice of genuine leather strap or solid stainless steel bracelet. etiquis.co.uk



Sport Lady Collection From £229

■ Etiquis founder Gary Butler, whose wife is a golfer, says that from the outset he "wanted an offering that was there for the ladies". There are seven designs to choose from in a choice of finishes. etiquis.co.uk



Sport Pro Collection From £269

■ Includes one of the best-sellers in the Etiquis line, *opposite page*, which was described by one reviewer as "an absolutely fantastic timepiece". There are six designs, each with the Butler Bezel and sapphire crystal glass. etiquis.co.uk



Sport Pro Ionic Collection From £329

■ The watch that says you "play from the black tees". Described as "brave, bold and stylish", this category is for the golf nut and offers three models, including one with a yellow dial, a nod to the Open Championship. etiquis.co.uk

'EACH DESIGN HAS A SUBTLE NOD TO GOLF, SUCH AS THE 3D BALL EFFECT ON THE FACE'



WATER
PROOF
JACKETS

Something for a rainy day

Discover the latest waterproof jackets, guaranteed to keep you dry and comfortable on the course

No matter where you live in Scotland, you'll have certainly experienced more than your fair share of rain on the golf course. In fact, you've probably experienced about five people's share, but one thing that's essential for getting you through is having the right gear to keep you dry while you play.

The weather this year has been nothing short of woeful and the conditions at this

year's Open Championship at the height of summer are testament to that.

If we always skipped playing golf because it was raining, we would never make it out onto the course, so thankfully, the world's best golf apparel manufacturers have put in the hard work to ensure we can stay dry and comfortable and still perform to our best.

That hasn't always been the case, though. It's only in recent years with

modern fabrics, new technology and innovation that we've seen a dramatic improvement in waterproof gear specifically designed for golf.

With that in mind, we've brought together all of the major brands in the game to showcase the newest men's and ladies' waterproof designs.

Winter is coming, so be sure to have one of these waiting in your wardrobe to keep you dry. >

MEN'S



Galvin Green Aston, £300, galvingreen.com



adidas Golf GORE-TEX PacLite, £184.99, adidasgolf.co.uk



Nike Hyperadapt STORM-FIT, £210, nike.com/golf

29
JACKETS
INSIDE

Ping Tour Eye

pingcollection.co.uk

£200

Pertex Shield+

■ A brand new technology incorporated by Ping, it offers high levels of wind and water protection with excellent breathability to create a lightweight, waterproof performance fabric for fast moving outdoor activities such as golf.

Sensor Dry

■ This technology ensures that the jacket boasts long-lasting waterproof and windproof protection. It also makes the jacket air permeable, which means it is a truly breathable product. The outerwear fabric is both lightweight and noiseless to eradicate any distractions.

Vent

■ Ping has added in a Vent detail on the chest of the jacket to allow for additional breathability.

Clean adjustable cuffs

■ Distractions are eliminated through the easy to use, minimal fuss cuff design.

FACT! IT RAINS A LOT IN SCOTLAND

We live in a country well known for its wet weather and Glasgow sees plenty of it. In fact, Glasgow averages over 15 rainy days a month all year round. That's effectively half the year!



Puma Golf Brush Back ½ Zip Storm, £74.99, pumagolf.com | Callaway Green Grass 2.0, £79.99, callawayeuropeapparel.com | FootJoy DryJoys Tour XP, £210, footjoy.co.uk



Sunice Bishop GORE-TEX, £199.99, sunice.com | **ProQuip** Tour-Lite, £129, proquipgolf.com | **Abacus** Barton, £119, abacussportswear.com



Mizuno Impermalite F10, £175, golf.mizuno-europe.com | **Sunderland** WhisperDry, £175.95, sunderlandgolf.com | **Stuburt** Cyclone, £74.99, stuburt.com



Benross 2016, £89.99, benrossgolf.com | **Cross Sportswear** Edge, £217, cross-sportswear.com | **Oscar Jacobson** Mickey, £160, oscarjacobson.com

Your Game Begins with the Tee-Up



Taking the Strain & Pain Out of your Game . . .



Products endorsed by Sam Torrance (OBE)

NOW AVAILABLE The New Tee-Up Foldaway



- No bending when teeing up
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- Great when travelling

It has been proven by our market research that these products can extend your golfing life and makes golf just a little more comfortable and enjoyable to play!



The "BAMP" a multi-purpose ball pick-up device

IA - Scotland
Easy to use. Perfect for anyone with back problems/bending on golf course.

Ed - North Carolina USA
Good system that really seems to work. Unfortunately I need it!!! Thank you.

AL - France
I promised to tell you how I got on with the golf aids... they performed superbly and impressed my colleagues!

For more information and to learn more about the new "Tee-Up" and the multi-purpose ball pickup "The BAMP" then please visit us at:

www.northcroftgolf.com

or call us on **+44 (0) 1488 685038**



AN INVITATION TO VIEW LORETTO SCHOOL AND THE GOLF ACADEMY'S NEW INDOOR CENTRE

RSVP - admissions@loretto.com or **0131 653 4455**



This summer sees the opening of Loretto Golf Academy's state-of-the-art Indoor Golf Centre. Our Open Mornings will provide an opportunity to visit Loretto School and view our Golf Academy's stunning new Indoor Golf Centre.

OUR OPEN MORNINGS TAKE PLACE ON;

Saturday, 19th September
Loretto Junior School
(boys and girls aged 0-12)

Saturday, 3rd October
Loretto Senior School
(boys and girls aged 12-18)

The Loretto Golf Academy, established in 2002, is unique amongst independent boarding and day schools in the United Kingdom. It offers pupils an exceptional opportunity to develop their sporting talent in tandem with a first-class, all-round education for boys and girls up to the age of 18. The Loretto Golf Academy operates from the School's practice facilities and local golf courses in East Lothian, Scotland, and is directed by the School's Golf Professional, Rick Valentine, and a team of top class external coaching professionals. The Loretto Golf Academy has had considerable success and is now widely recognised as one of the top independent boarding and day golf schools in Europe.

www.loretto.com

Loretto School, Linkfield Road, Musselburgh, East Lothian. EH21 7RE

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FBD Hotels & Resorts

SAMPLE WINTER GOLF PACKAGES

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3 rounds at La Cala (Asia, Europa, America)
01-30 01-29
Nov 2015 Feb 2016
from **£230** from **£225**
(299€) (295€)

MIXED GOLF A

1 round at Torrequebrada, Cabopino & El Chaparral
16 Nov 15 12-29
- 11 Feb 16 Feb 16
from **£210** from **£245**
(275€) (319€)

MIXED GOLF B

1 round at La Cala, Torrequebrada & Santana
23-30 Dec 2015
Nov 2015 & Jan 2016
from **£259** from **£240**
(335€) (315€)

* Prices per person based on 2 pers. sharing a 1 bedroom Exterior apt. Rates in £ are for guideline only based on approx £1=€1.30. Euro rates prevail. Limited availability. Fixed packages. Dates excl. 21-31 Dec 15.

Under Armour Gore-Tex Tips

underarmour.com

Gore-Tex

■ The fabric in this latest design from Under Armour uses three-layer Gore Tex material to ensure it is 100% waterproof. It is also windproof and remains breathable at all times.

Adjustable cuffs

■ The easy-to-use cuff design means you can keep out the cold, even when swinging.



£230

Adjustable hem

■ Bungee adjusters on the hem are excellent for keeping the cold out and ensuring the correct fit for the jacket.

LADIES



*** NEW GEAR**



Callaway Liberty, £99.99, callawayeuropeapparel.com | **Ping** Olivia, £90, pingcollection.co.uk | **FootJoy** DryJoys HydroLite, £140, footjoy.co.uk



Sunice Princess Flexvent, £189.99, sunice.com | **Sunderland** Bergen, £114.95, sunderlandgolf.com | **Abacus** Walton, £159, abacussportswear.com



ProQuip TourFlex, £99.99, proquipgolf.com | **Benross** 2016 Ladies, £89.99, benrossgolf.com | **Cross Sportswear** Edge, £217, cross-sportswear.com

COMPETITION

WIN this stylish outfit from Stromberg

The only outfit you'll need this winter keeping you warm and dry from course to clubhouse

We have teamed up with Stromberg to offer one lucky *bunkered* reader the chance to win this featured outfit worth over £200, plus five runners-up will receive a pair of the Stromberg Wintra trousers, perfect for winter golf.

Stromberg is a British golf clothing brand that started out in 1977 designing and producing menswear ranges for well known designer brands before deciding to mix business with pleasure and build its base around golf in 2000.

As part of the prize, our winner will receive a pair of black Wintra trousers, a Sahara base layer, a Le Touquet jumper, Techno socks, and a black reversible gloss and matt belt.

The Wintra trousers are amongst the latest additions to Stromberg's line-up and feature 3-Ply technology. A revolutionary new fabric, it features three different layers ideal for winter golf. The outer layer gives a stylish appearance with a water resistant finish, while the middle layer acts as a breathable waterproof membrane preventing water getting through the fabric and the inside layer acts as a thermal layer keeping you warm in the winter months.

Each of the runners-up can choose between four colour options: black, steel grey, navy and glacier blue.

To see the full range from Stromberg, visit stromberggolfonline.com



HOW
TO WIN

IN WHAT YEAR DID STROMBERG START BUILDING ITS BUSINESS AROUND GOLF?

■ A: 1970

■ B: 1985

■ C: 2000

ENTER AT bunkered.co.uk/competitions

Or send your answer, name and contact details to: Stromberg Comp, *bunkered*, PSP House, 50 High Craighall Road, Craighall Business Park, Glasgow, G4 9UD

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: All entries - either online or by postcard - must be received no later than October 28, 2015. Only one entry per person can be accepted. The editor's decision is final. Prize is non-refundable and there is no cash alternative. Competition only open to UK entrants. Prizes cannot be sold or exchanged for financial gain. By entering the competition you agree to share your data with these supporting partners. See our Facebook page for winners' details: facebook.com/bunkeredmagazine



Breaking new ground

Under Armour's innovative styling and youthful approach continues to push golf apparel boundaries

Under Armour has continued marking its innovative footprint on the golf apparel industry with the introduction of the first 3-Layer Full-Stretch GORE-TEX® rain suit.

It has teamed up with W.L. Gore & Associates - makers of GORE-TEX® fabric - the global leader in waterproofing technology, to develop 'the most advanced rainsuit in golf' as it heralds a 'new era' in golf rainwear technology.

The UA GORE-TEX® Tips Jacket and UA GORE-TEX® Tips Pant has been able to achieve that through the introduction of two key design features. Firstly, the three-layer bonded fabric delivers a durable, smooth outer and a soft, brushed interior, keeping

it waterproof yet breathable at all times and in all conditions.

Secondly, Under Armour says the 10% stretch fabric applied across the whole suit gives golfers 25% more manoeuvrability than other GORE-TEX® rainwear for golf.

The use of windproof materials and construction help to shield you from the elements, while the secure hand pockets and chest pocket mean you can safely store accessories in the pockets without fear of getting them wet. The full zip jacket

also features adjustable cuffs and a bungee adjuster on the hem to keep out the cold and is available in two colours, black and stealth grey.

"The GORE-TEX® Artemis three-layer laminate is a beautiful laminate that will make a great golf jacket," said Larry Abbott of W.L. Gore & Associates. "The soft hand will feel great on the body, and the stretch will be great for swinging the golf club. It will be ideal for the ultimate comfort in bad weather. The stretch three-layer construction

makes it great for swinging a golf club."

The UA GORE-TEX® Tips Pant has been designed to fit like a regular trouser and also features a soft waistband for a comfortable fit, hip adjusters, secure side and back pockets, a working fly and 12-inch leg zips for increased breathability.

Spieth himself is impressed. "Under Armour constantly pushes the boundaries in what's achievable in golf apparel to help make athletes better," he said. "The new GORE-TEX® product is the most advanced waterproofing technology I've ever seen in golf and is sure to give me an edge over the competition."

For more information, log-on to underarmour.com

"THE GORE-TEX PRODUCT IS THE MOST ADVANCED I'VE SEEN"

JORDAN SPIETH, UA ATHLETE & TWO-TIME MAJOR CHAMPION

The Gear



£250

■ UA Gore-Tex Tips Full Zip



£230

■ UA Gore-Tex Tips Half Zip



£215

■ UA Gore-Tex Tips Pant



GROWTH OF UNDER ARMOUR

1996 – Kevin Plank, 23, a special teams captain of the University of Maryland football team, begins the business from his grandmother's basement in Washington D.C.

1998 – Under Armour outgrows that basement and moves to an all-new headquarters and warehouse in Baltimore.

1999 – UA is asked to supply a jockstrap to Warner Bros for the film *Any Given Sunday* and is worn by the lead character, played by Jamie Foxx. Plank purchased an ad in *ESPN The Magazine* as the film entered cinemas. It generated close to \$750,000 in sales. Plank puts himself on the payroll for the first time.

2003 – The brand launches its first television commercial, which sends it on the way to becoming a household name in the USA.

2005 – Under Armour Golf is launched. The brand goes public at the end of the year with \$281million in revenue. Hunter Mahan signs as its first golf ambassador.

2007 – Mahan gives Under Armour its first win on tour on June 24 at the Travelers Championship.

2010 – The brand's revenue breaks \$1bn for the first time.

2013 – On January 14, Under Armour announces it has signed Jordan Spieth, a month after he turns professional.

2015 – Jordan Spieth becomes the first Under Armour athlete to win a major after claiming The Masters.



UNDER ARMOUR™



IRELAND

World-class golf and even better craic

The Emerald Isle is full of fantastic courses, towns, villages, people - the works!

■ Royal Portrush

Boasting over 30% of the world's links courses, Ireland is a haven for lovers of golf in its most original of forms. The land that has produced major champions such as Rory McIlroy, Darren Clarke, Padraig Harrington and Graeme McDowell, its links courses are renowned as some of the finest in the world.

For that reason, planning a golf holiday in Ireland is an absolute treat, and whether it is the island's famous seaside layouts you're after or its impressive list of

championship parkland layouts, there's something for all tastes and budgets.

Recent research from Golf in Ireland found that 65% of golfing tourists had played in Ireland before their most recent trip, showing just how much they enjoyed the overall golfing experience and tremendous hospitality on offer.

In the past, Ireland has played host to some of the game's biggest golf tournaments, from the Open Championship to the Ryder Cup and the Solheim Cup, and golf's oldest tournament

will return across the Irish Sea in the near future, as Royal Portrush has been confirmed as the latest addition to the Open rota.

The championship is likely to be played over the club's Dunluce Links, which is considered by many to be one of the most challenging courses in the world. It is also home to one of the most stunning par-4s in golf, the 411-yard fifth hole. A dog-leg played from an elevated tee towards the ocean, it rewards the daring shot across the wide expanse of rough that lies in ►

**'NO MATTER WHAT IT IS THAT YOU ARE
LOOKING FOR, IRELAND HAS COURSES TO
SUIT PEOPLE OF ALL TASTES AND BUDGETS'**

► front of you. Taking in the stunning views from the green towards the 12th century Dunluce castle is a treat in itself.

The club is also home to the 18-hole Valley Course. Built between the huge sand hills immediately along the shore, it is a very fine test of links golf.

Of course, Royal Portrush is only one of the many fantastic links layouts littered along the north and west coasts of the country. Another perfect example of the quality on offer can be found at Portstewart, where Willie Park Jnr redesigned the course in the 1920s.

The club has played host to numerous major amateur and professional championships over the years and offers 54 holes of spectacular golf on Ulster's Causeway Coast. It is one of the few clubs in Ireland with three 18-hole courses. The Strand is a par-72 championship links and the jewel in Portstewart's crown. The Riverside course, meanwhile, is perfect for the society golfer, with nine of its holes running down the river's edge. The Old Course is the final layout and lies east of Portstewart where the club was founded in 1894.

Situated five miles from Coleraine, Castlerock is a fabulous links course built among rolling sand dunes. A classic design, it is only a 20 minute drive from both Royal Portrush and Portstewart. When Ben Sayers designed the course, he insisted that the links of Castlerock would equal those at Troon, North Berwick and Sandwich. It is now considered to be amongst the best in the country. Castlerock, incidentally, is where a young Graeme McDowell won a gold medal in 2000 in the World University Golf Championships.

Sir Nick Faldo was enlisted to strengthen the Old Links at Ballyliffin in recent years

and his work has brought much acclaim from the club's members and visitors, while the new Glashedy Links at the club was a collaboration between Pat Ruddy and Tom Craddock, who fashioned the course around the impressive dunes that surround its land.

Further along the coast, Rosapenna is a great place to enjoy some golf during a stay on the emerald isle. Home to two championship links courses as well as a four-star hotel, its Old Tom Morris Links ranked No.37 in *Golf Digest Ireland's* Top 100 Courses and its layout was updated as recently as 2009.

Boasting wide, rolling fairways amidst undulating

terrain, it was originally laid out by Old Tom, before two other great golfing champions, Harry Vardon and James Braid, added length and more detailed bunkering to the already impressive natural greens left by Old Tom.

Since the incorporation of nine new holes to the Old Links in 2009, the original back nine, known as the 'Coastguard Holes', are now played as a separate nine-hole course beginning and ending at the practice ground.

If you would rather discover a lesser-known gem, then look no further than Connemara, Carne, Enniscrone, Donegal and Narin & Portnoo.

Donegal Golf Club, in

particular, is one to look out for. Described by Darren Clarke as one of his favourite courses, it is a challenging links layout that has been labelled as the 'Muirfield of Ireland' in the past. The course boasts two loops of nine, with the first nine an outer loop and the second nine an inner loop running in the opposite direction. You need to be at your best to score well here. Enniscrone is another stand-out design and is known for having some of the largest dunes in Ireland.

Full of character and personality, the famed courses of the north and west of Ireland should be on every golfer's bucket list.



■ Portstewart

GOLF IN IRELAND IN NUMBERS

472

The number of golf courses in the whole of Ireland, according to the findings of a recent R&A report.

176k

Number of overseas visitors to Ireland in 2014 who specified golf as the reason for their visit.

6

The percentage of holidaymakers in Ireland who played at least one round of golf during their trip.

10

The number of shots Bernard Langer won the Irish Open by in 1987. It remains the largest winning margin to date.



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SIGHTSEEING IN DUBLIN



■ **Guinness Storehouse**
Regarded as one of the finest attractions in the city, the iconic Storehouse is located in the heart of the St James's Gate Brewery, which has been home to Guinness since 1759. A former fermentation plant, a visit will teach you all you ever wanted to know about the world famous beer. The tour concludes in the stunning Gravity Bar, where you'll receive a complimentary pint of Guinness and a chance to enjoy the 360-degree views across Dublin City.

■ **Dublin Zoo**
Full of rare and exotic animals in a wide variety of natural habitats, giraffes, zebras, ostriches and elephants can all be found here. A walk around here will also allow you to see up close other amazing animals, including tigers, hippos, gorillas and chimpanzees, to name a few.

■ **St Patrick's Cathedral**
Built between 1220 and 1260, the cathedral is one of the few buildings left from the medieval city of Dublin. Today, it is the National Cathedral for the Church of Ireland and is still the largest cathedral in the country.

■ **Nightlife**
Situating on the south bank of the River Liffey in the centre of the city, the Temple Bar area is widely regarded to be Dublin's cultural quarter and is renowned for its lively nightlife that is popular with tourists. If you're looking for an authentic Irish drinking experience, look no further than the Brazen Head, which is officially Ireland's oldest pub. Known for its live music, it is not too far from the Guinness Storehouse.



■ Portmarnock

DUBLIN COUNTY

If you're flying in to Dublin and fancy playing some golf close to the capital, there are a host of fantastic layouts for you to experience around the county.

Portmarnock and Royal Dublin are the most senior of those, having hosted national and international competitions for over 100 years, with the former a majestic layout. Portmarnock hosted the likes of Arnold Palmer and Sam Snead who claimed Canada Cup victory over the classic links in 1960. It also played host to the Walker Cup in 1991, which saw an American team featuring Phil Mickelson and David Duval record a memorable triumph.

Royal Dublin, meanwhile, is a very traditional links that had to be rebuilt with the influence of architect Harry Colt after being destroyed by

the military during the First World War.

The club is a favourite of three-time major champion Padraig Harrington, who is a Dublin native. He said: "Given its quality and location, Royal Dublin Golf Club is perfect for anyone staying in the city and looking to play a great links course."

Describing itself as 'Dublin's most interesting golf course', Malahide Golf Club is home to 27 holes of parkland golf and can be found about two kilometres from the centre of the city. Founded in 1892, it is one of the oldest golf clubs in Ireland and is a gently

undulating layout. Its offering is made up of three nine-hole courses that can be played in any combination and presents an intriguing test for players of all levels.

Sitting in the heart of Dublin, St Anne's Golf Club is both a challenge and great fun to play. With the Irish Sea on one side and a nature reserve on the other, you can enjoy spectacular views of Dublin Bay as you make your way round the traditional links layout. Its design boasts a great mix of holes to test all aspects of your game and you're guaranteed a warm welcome from the members.

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■ Waterville Golf Links



■ Ballybunion



■ Tralee



■ Old Head of Kinsale

SOUTH WEST IRELAND

Comprising the counties of Cork and Kerry, the south west of Ireland is home to some of the country's most impressive golfing experiences.

Waterville Golf Links is arguably one of the finest, set on a promontory surrounded by the sea. Its location is remote, but made all the more stunning by the spectacular views out to the Macgillicuddy's Reeks mountain range in the north east, and the stunning Ballinskelligs Bay and Atlantic Ocean to the south west.

Its fairways are gently undulating and the front nine is played across relatively flat ground, while the back nine makes its way through many of the many sizeable dunes.

Also in County Kerry, you'll find Ballybunion, home to two

irascible, more spectacular, more flirtatious, more brutal and more unforgiving'. Designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr, it's a true test of golfing skill.

Tralee Golf Club has the distinction of being the first European course to be designed by Arnold Palmer. After opening his design in 1984, Palmer said: "I have never come across a piece of land so ideally suited for the building of a golf course."

The combination and variety in the holes makes it a joy to play and it will grab your attention from the very first tee shot to your final putt. The third hole is considered to be Tralee's signature hole and is a par-3 measuring almost 200 yards from the back tees. With its stunning scenery bound to take your breath away, you'll also find a tower at the back of the green

'TRALEE WAS THE FIRST-EVER EUROPEAN GOLF COURSE LAID OUT BY ARNOLD PALMER'

traditional links courses. Both are unique, both in character and the test they offer, with a number of holes on the Old Course bordered by the Atlantic Ocean as they make their way through the magnificent dunes.

There are several great holes in particular here, with the seventh, 11th, 16th and 17th all taking you along the ocean's edge, while the 216-yard par-3 15th can be a real test, especially when you're hitting straight into the teeth of a gale.

The Cashen Course, meanwhile, is all about precision, especially from the tee. When comparing it to the Old Course, the club describes it as 'more

that dates back to the 1190s.

No visit to this corner is complete with a trip to the Old Head of Kinsale in County Cork. It has views that'll make your jaw drop. The golf course is, quite honestly, frighteningly brilliant.

Wherever you set foot in Ireland, you're bound to come across a golf course that will fill you with joy. With so many gems across a wide variety of styles, you're guaranteed an unforgettable golfing experience. Simply visit Ireland and you won't be disappointed.

For more information on courses, accommodation and booking a trip, visit ireland.com/golf

GET THE MOST FROM YOUR IRISH TRIP

■ Green fees

There are plenty of ways to get a great deal on the size of the green fee you pay to play golf in Ireland. Special golf passes, 'early bird' offers and group discounts are all widely available. Either contact the club directly or speak to your tour operator to see if you're eligible for any golf discounts.

■ Caddies and carts

Due to sizeable dunes and undulating land on many of Ireland's golf courses, it is not always possible to use a buggy at the courses. On the other hand, however, caddies are almost always available to help you find your way round and keep you nice and relaxed!

■ Weather

Like in Scotland, the best time to visit Ireland is during the summer months when daytime temperatures average a comfortable 15-20°C. There's plenty of sunlight in July and August, too, (around 18 hours) giving you plenty of time to play as many courses as you can.

Wish you were here...

There's no time like the present to start planning your next short golf break...

It might be nearing the end of what we'd call the 'regular golf season' but that doesn't mean you can't get away from it all to enjoy a short golf break with family or friends. There are great places up and down the country

where you can escape from the norm for a night or two. What's more, you can do so without burning a massive hole in your pocket. Over these two pages, we've hand-picked some great short break offers that you really can't afford to ignore...



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BUNKER TALK

Introducing the 'Rory Rule'

Special exemption or special treatment? You decide



Golf is full of rules, ranging from the controversial to the downright daft. However, the latest one invented by the European Tour might well be the most contentious to date.

Its new chief executive Keith Pelley recently announced that reigning European No.1 Rory McIlroy has been granted a special exemption to play in the circuit's Final Series - incorporating the climax of the Race To Dubai - despite not playing the minimum number of tournaments required this season.

European Tour regulations demand that players play a minimum of 13 events to be eligible for the season's finale. McIlroy, however, missed three tournaments this summer on account of an injured ankle.

The tour determined that this amounted to 'exceptional circumstances' and so made the Northern Irishman 'automatically eligible' to compete in the season's final four events.

"I have taken this situation and the resulting decision very seriously," said Pelley, who agreed McIlroy would

be unable to complete his event requirements 'given his current global commitments and his recuperation and recovery programme which strictly limits the number of weeks in a row he can play'.

The decision, however, has split opinion. Some believe McIlroy is fully deserving of the exemption, not least because he is the current Race To Dubai leader.

Others, though, insist that Rory is being given preferential treatment by the tour and have pointed out that he could easily have met the required 13 events had he not

opted instead to play in the PGA Tour's FedEx Cup Playoffs. For example, the Russian Open was played in the same week as the Deutsche Bank Championship - but he chose (not suprisingly, it must be added) to play the PGA Tour event over the European one.

What do you make of the so-called 'Rory Rule'? We want to hear your opinions.



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Golf's pitchmark problem - **SOLVED!**

Innovative on-course signage can reduce number of unrepaired ball indents

A team of neuroscientists believe they have found a solution to the problem of unrepaired pitchmarks.

Building on research in other areas, Sport Psychology Ltd (SPL) carried out a study into the psychological impact of neuroscience on players in a controlled study carried at Surrey Downs Golf Club in June and July this year.

The created the PSYgns

concept, which combines the latest research with traditional on-course signage.

Research has shown that the addition of a specific type of eyes onto a sign can have a profound impact on the behaviour of the readers in a way that no other sign can.

SPL/PSYgns partnered with Wimbledon Signs to research various types of eyes and then manufactured a set of PSYgns, pictured below, to investigate their impact on golfers.

They chose two similar holes, with similar shaped greens, for their study. One had no PSYgns, the other did. Both were almost identical in terms of the number of unrepaired pitchmarks at the start of the study.

The results gleaned were incredible. The control green (no PSYgns) saw a 27% increase in pitchmarks after one month, whilst the study green (with PSYgns) saw a 51% decrease over the same timeframe.

An SPL spokesperson said: "The PSYgns work by triggering deep-rooted circuits in the brain. These circuits are hardwired into the emotional parts of the human brain and drive our automatic behaviours."

For more information, email psych@sportpsychology.co.uk or call **07806 794 527**.



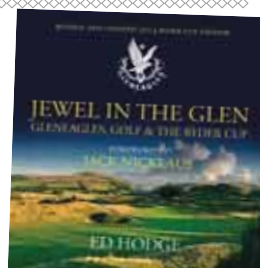
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■ It has been a year since Jamie Donaldson secured 'Glory in the Glen' for Europe in the 2014 Ryder Cup. Keen to relive the drama and enjoy a unique portrait of Gleneagles, Scottish golf and the history of the biennial match? Then the stylish, hardback *Jewel in the Glen: Gleneagles, Golf and the Ryder Cup* by Ed Hodge is for you!

The resort's official book has been fully revised and updated, featuring a chapter on the 2014 Ryder Cup and provides a rich celebration of golf at Gleneagles.

It boasts a foreword from Jack Nicklaus, with contributions also from Gary Player, Lee Trevino, Paul McGinley, Tom Watson, Sam Torrance, Colin Montgomerie, Sir Jackie Stewart, Andy Murray, Stephen Hendry and Kenny Dalglish.

For more info, log-on to www.birlinn.co.uk/Jewel-in-the-Glen-new-edition.html



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Prize Crossword

Once you have completed the crossword, re-arrange the letters in the yellow squares to find a star of **THE 2015 OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP**.



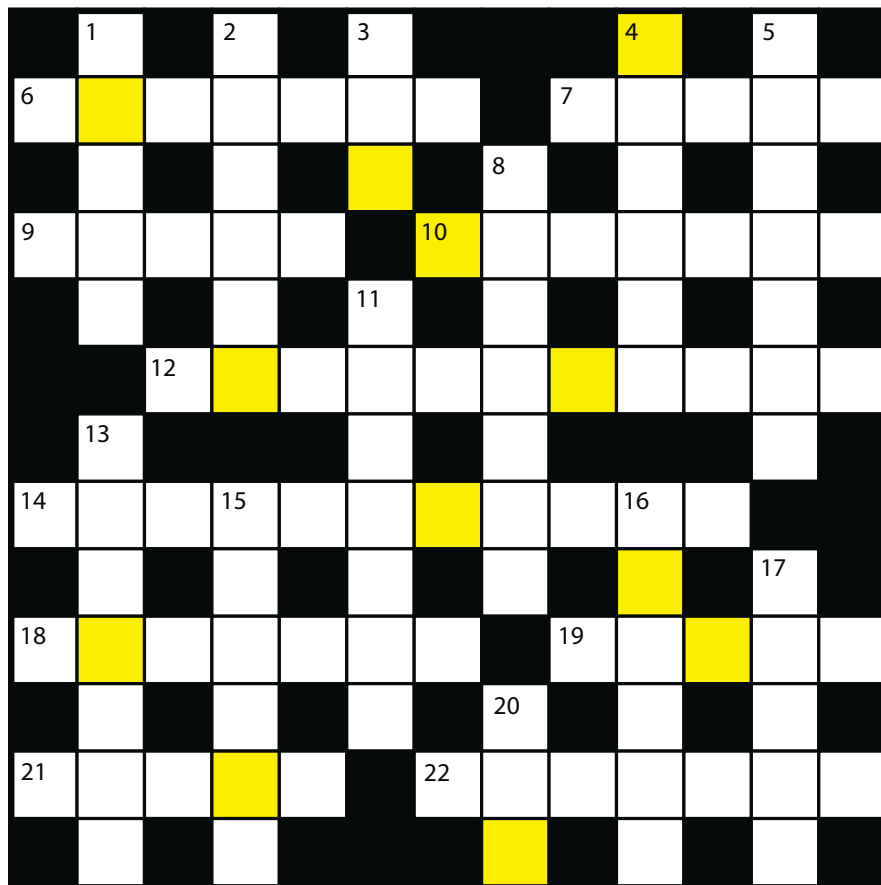
WIN... A DOZEN SRIXON AD333 GOLF BALLS

ACROSS

6. Balls in rabbit ones get full relief (7)
7. Day, who tied fourth in the 2015 Open at St Andrews (5)
9. And 17 Down. It will host the 2016 Open Championship (5,5)
10. Jordan Spieth's first major win of 2015 (7)
12. And 4 Down. Spanish golfer forced to withdraw from the 1997 Ryder Cup (6,5,6)
14. Welshman who lost in a 36-hole play-off for the 1958 Open (5,6)
18. Golfer who won two majors in 1971 (7)
19. Richie Ramsay replaced this South African in the 2015 Open (5)
21. Grady, involved in the 1989 Open play-off (5)
22. ____ Gales, the ninth oldest golf club in the world (7)

DOWN

1. It is used to retrieve a ball from a burn (5)
2. The Hyundai Tournament of Champions is held here (6)
3. In Crete, Ernie finds this golf equipment! (3)
4. See 12 Across
5. A stage for golf, or starter, main and dessert. (7)
8. Furniture suitable for Stewart Cink! (7)
11. A phenomenal part of Zach Johnson's game in winning the 2015 Open (7)
13. Tiger Woods often has difficulty finding this part of the course (7)
15. 22 Across is close to this town (6)
16. Veteran BBC golf commentator (6)
17. See 9 Across
20. In duel Spieth takes on another golfer! (3)



ISSUE 141 ANSWER: PAUL LAWRIE WINNER: MIKE YOUNG, BEAULY

Answer

Your Name

Address

.....

Email

Send your entry to 'Prize Crossword', bunkered, 50 High Craighall Rd, Glasgow G4 9UD.
Crossword produced by Jim McLaren / jim.mclaren5@gmail.com



MAJOR UPGRADES UNVEILED AT MELDRUM HOUSE

Meldrum House Country Hotel in Aberdeenshire has unveiled a host of exciting improvements to its on and off course facilities.

The four-star resort, located just ten miles north of Inverurie, invested over £50,000 in making a series of changes to its Graham Webster-designed layout, whilst a brand new professional shop has also been opened. The renovations are part of a planned multi-million pound expansion project that will also add a further 28 bedrooms and an impressive new ballroom.

"The course changes unveiled designed to improve playability while retaining the top-level golfing experience our championship course presents," explained chief

executive Andy Burgess. "It's a balancing act but the improvements have been warmly received by members and visitors alike. Equally, the changes to the pro shop also follow the same objectives of continuing the upward trajectory and maintaining the momentum at the resort. The transformation of Meldrum House is ongoing, but we have already created one of Scotland's top golf resorts which is a great achievement. To stay at this level, we must maintain the momentum we have established and that means making investments both on and off the course."

For more information, log-on to meldrumhouse.com

21

Dame Laura Davies

Arguably the most successful British female golfer of all time, Dame Laura Davies has blazed a rather impressive trail since she turned professional 30 years ago. A decorated amateur, she started her pro career on the WPGA, which has since become the Ladies European Tour, in 1985, winning both the 'Rookie of the Year' and Order of Merit titles. Since then, she has barely looked back. She has won the LET OOM a total of seven times, topped the LPGA money list once, been named the LPGA Player

of the Year' in 1996 and, along the way, racked up a spectacular haul of more than 80 professional victories around the world. She has played in more than 100 major championships, winning four, and has etched her place in the history books of the Solheim Cup, too, as a cornerstone and ever-present of the European side from the first match at Lake Nona in 1990 to the 2011 victory at Killeen Castle in Ireland. Here are some of her most impressive stats and facts.

● **NEXT ISSUE: DAVIS LOVE III**

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Davies' career earnings on the LPGA. She currently sits in 16th place on the career money list.

4 The number of major championships Davies has won: the Women's PGA twice and the US Women's Open and du Maurier Classic once each. She is Great Britain's most successful golfer in terms of majors won and the second most prolific European behind Annika Sorenstam.

8 The number of play-offs Davies lost on the LPGA out of ten contested. Her only two wins were in the 1987 US Women's Open and the 1997 Standard Register Ping event.

12 The number of Solheim Cup matches Davies has played in. She is also the event's record scorer, with 25 points to her name.

19 The number of eagles Davies had during the 2004 season - an LPGA record.

20 The number of consecutive seasons (1985-2004) during which Davies won at least one individual title somewhere in the world.

32 The position the Golf Club Managers' Association ranked Davies in 2012 on a list of the most powerful people in British golf.

45 The number of times Davies has won on the Ladies European Tour - a tour record. Dale Reid is her closest challenger with 21 titles.

6 The number of minutes of professional football - yep, football - that Davies played in 1997. She came on as a substitute for Myrtle Beach Seadaws in the US in their 4-1 loss to New Jersey Imperials in a match that also featured future Manchester United and USA goalkeeper Tim Howard.

72.3

Davies' career stroke average on the LPGA (1988-2014). Her best season was 1997, when her scores averaged out at 70.32. Her worst was 2012 (74.07).



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